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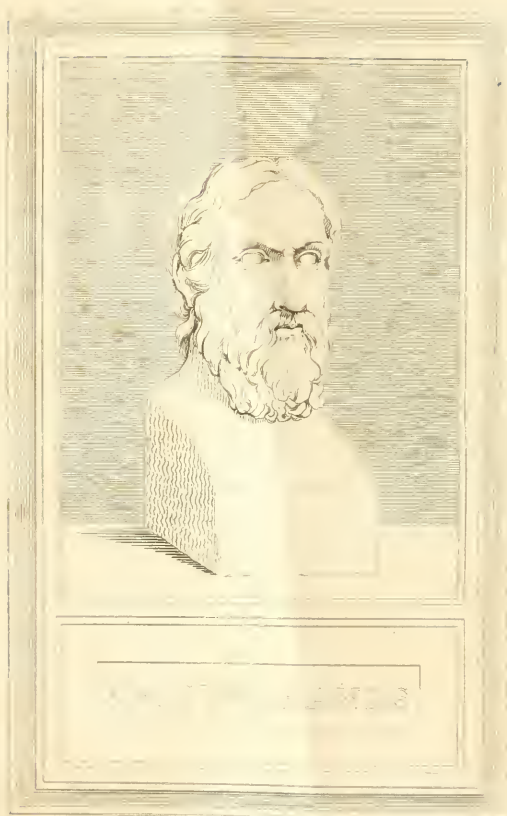
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COMEDIES
OF
Aristophanes.





ALFRED, KING OF NORTH ANGLIA.

Engraved by J. G. Smith, and published by J. G. Smith, 1843.

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COMEDIES

OF

Aristophanes.

(VIZ :

THE CLOUDS,
PLUTUS,
THE FROGS,
THE BIRDS;

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH;

WITH NOTES.

[by Richard Cumberland and others]

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London :

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TO
WILLIAM GIFFORD, ESQ.

TRANSLATOR

OF

JUVENAL, &c. &c.

THE TRANSLATION

OF

The Birds

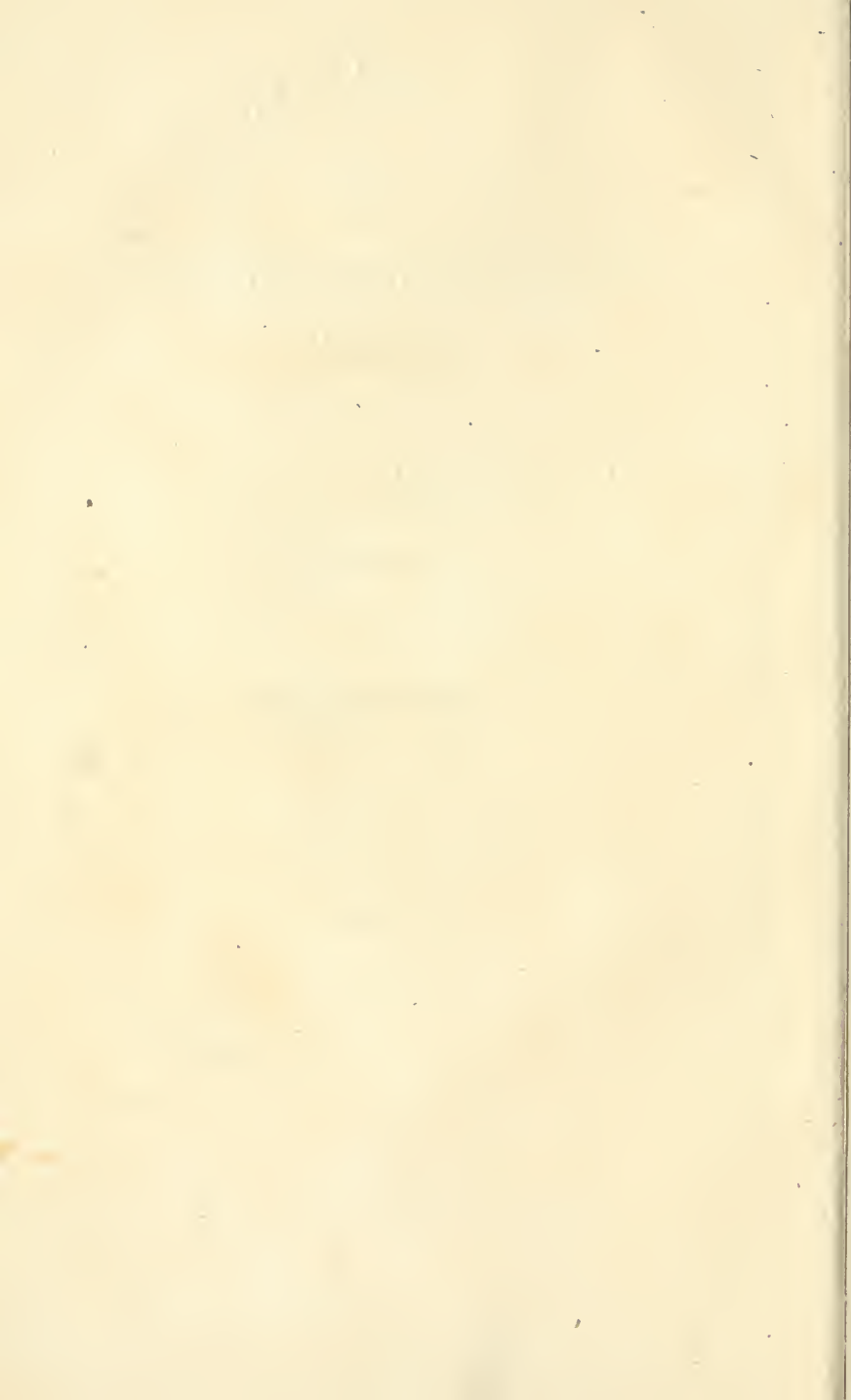
OF

ARISTOPHANES

IS INSCRIBED

BY

ITS AUTHOR.



ADVERTISEMENT.



IN giving this volume to the public, the Editors have reason to believe, that it contains translations of the only plays of Aristophanes, that have ever been attempted in English. Duplicate versions of the CLOUDS and PLUTUS have been made by White and Theobald; and this, if we mistake not, is all that we have of Aristophanes in our language. Mr. Cumberland's translation of the CLOUDS, owing to the extreme rapidity of its sale, has been for some time out of print. The high character, which that learned man had attained, as a translator of Aristophanes, had induced many to

believe, that he was the only man of the age, who was adequate to the task. In consequence of this, we have, for a series of years back been constantly urged to request Mr. Cumberland to undertake a complete translation of that author. He declined this on the plea that the generality of the plays would not admit of an English version. He at last, however, agreed to undertake the *PLUTUS*; which, had he lived, we are of opinion he would have completed.

As the study of Aristophanes is now becoming prevalent in our Universities, we hope that this first publication of a *series* of his plays will meet the approbation of the student. Where the author himself is difficult, and the helps to understand him are few, every assistance, however slight in itself, must be more or less useful. The massy folios of Kuster and Portus are out of the reach of the ordinary scholar; while the notes of Brunck are critical rather than explanatory. Take away these, and where is the scholar to look for a solution of his difficulties? The Lexicon by Sanxay is a mere

dictionary of words, superficially executed, and ought to be considered rather as a *clavis* to the understanding of a few specific terms, than as a general Lexicon to Aristophanes. The only *useful* edition of this author is that of Kuster; the one, which gives us the best text, that of Brunck. Not that Aristophanes has had few editors; the notes and commentaries, which have been written by different scholars, who have undertaken to illustrate him, are all, in general, excellent in their way; but the misfortune is, that there is no *separate* edition, which can be recommended to the student as a means of enabling him to read and understand his author by the help of that, and that only. There are more and better materials in this country, than in all Europe besides, for the formation of a good and standard edition. Exclusively of the collations of different MSS. given us by Kuster, Brunck, Invernizius, Beck, &c. and the opportunities we have of referring to the earlier editions; in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, we have the ample margins of Gelenius's edition deluged, as it were, with annotations from the pen of

Professor Porson;¹ and in the British Museum, the margins of the very same edition are replete with conjectural emendations, and illustrations of difficult passages, by Dr. Bentley.² An edition, combining the advantages of a text corrected from these resources, a reprint of the genuine scholia, and a judicious selection from the copious productions of modern and ancient commentators, would immortalise the man, who could be found adequate to

¹ “ Porro inter Comicos exiguam tantum hujus voluminis partem vindicat sibi Aristophanes; in quem tamen expolendum semper incumberebat Porsonus, et in hoc omnes nervos intendebat: quin etiam credibile est, si vita suppeditasset, Comicorum principem demum exiturum fuisse, à principe Criticorum innumeris ferè locis restitutum, Atticoque suo nitore postliminio donatum. In adversariis igitur extat magna notarum copia, ad superstites Aristophanis fabulas pertinentium, quæ forsàn novæ editioni aliquandò occasionem dabunt. Quapropter Collegii nostri rectoribus placuit, has in aliud tempus sepositas servari.” *Preface to Porson's Adversaria*, p. xv-vi.

² “ Quæ in editione meâ Bentleio tribuuntur emendationes, omnes ex ejus libro desumptæ sunt, qui in Museo Britannico depositus est. Conjecturas suas in margine editionis Frobenianæ exaravit criticorum princeps, quarum maximè memorabiles in usum meum descripsi.” *Elmsley's Preface to his Acharnians*, p. iv.

the undertaking; and reflect no slight credit on the English nation as a literary people. Unfortunately, at the present day, we see the time and talent of those, who are, or ought to be, our best scholars, expended almost entirely upon verbal criticism. The good old practice of reading for the sake of information and mental improvement, is lost in a mistaken application of importance to what is, by itself, the most trivial. Verbal criticism, when not valued above what it deserves, is of first-rate use; but, when every petty editor fancies himself a Bentley, or a Porson, because he can introduce a new reading, suggested to his refined taste by similar combinations of letters, or by conjectural emendation adapted to his own mode of belief,—can cut down a line into a certain number of syllables, in order to make it correspond with some other line in an antistrophe;—or can muster patience and stupidity enough to run through a whole catalogue of blunders, which owe their existence to the wretched carelessness of an ignorant copyist; and that too with as much exactness, as if the reputed authenticity of the work he is editing

depended upon such exertion,—we cannot but condemn the consummate absurdity of such a practice. Give us a work edited in the way that Baver's Thucydides is edited, and we will neither ask whether MSS. read τὸ λοιπὸν or τολοιπὸν, whether ἐριννὺς or ἐρινύς is the form to be preferred, or whether Aristophanes wrote ψαμμοκοσιογάργαρα or ψαμμακοσιογάργαρα.

We take this opportunity of acknowledging the kindness of Mr. Dunster in permitting us to republish his translation of the *FROGS*, which has long been before the public: its acknowledged merit is a sufficient authority for its introduction into the present volume.

We now leave this in the hands of the scholar, who will be pleased to decide upon the propriety of this first essay to a regular translation of Aristophanes, accordingly as may best suit his way of thinking.

London, Oct. 1st, 1812.


The Clouds

OF


ARISTOPHANES:

Acted at ATHENS in the second Year of Olymp. 89.

AMINIAS being *ARCHON*.



TRANSLATED BY R. CUMBERLAND.



GRAIIS INGENIUM, GRAIIS DEDIT ORE ROTUNDO
MUSA LOQUI.

Dedication

TO THE AUTHOR

OF THE

Essay on the Principles of Translation.

SIR,

THE approbation, which you have been pleased to express in your Essay above named, of some fragments of the Greek comic poets, rendered into English by me, and inserted in the volumes of *The Observer*, encourages me to present to you this specimen of my humble endeavours upon a larger scale. It is a work of difficulty, and I probably should not have had spirits to have resumed the undertaking, and conducted it to the end, had not your very flattering opinion of my former attempts given me courage for the task. Aspiring to deserve your praise, as the test of my success with the public, I have now completed what I had only given a specimen of in my *Observer*, No. 141. and beg leave to present you with an entire translation of the comedy of **THE CLOUDS.**

Having fully treated of this comedy and its author, I have only to remark upon this occasion, that there is little which I now wish to add, and nothing that I have since found reason to retract. I flatter myself that these essays contain as fair and as full a discussion of the subject as modern criticism can require, and that my remarks upon Ælian's charge are satisfactory for the purpose of confuting his calumny, and vindicating the character of Aristophanes from any collusion with Anytus and Melitus, who did not bring Socrates to trial, till eighteen years at least after this comedy was acted at Athens.

I do not pretend to justify the poet's motives for this personal attack upon Socrates and his school, further than by refuting imputations, which are false upon the face of them. I think it is clear he was not suborned by bribes to the attack ; and I further think that any curious inquirer, who will take a fair and candid review of the period, in which this satirical drama was produced, will not fail to find very natural inducements for a comic poet to draw forth the weapons of his ridicule against the schools and academies then existing ; and I do not scruple to add, even against that very school in particular, which is here singled out as the object of contempt.

You will be pleased to take notice, that I call the motives *natural* ; I do not go the length to say that they were just, or liberal, or such as our more gentle manners can in this age approve.

The philosophers in general, and Socrates in particular, had been adverse to the comic stage ; they had so far carried their point as to silence it, and kept the theatre shut during two years, whilst it laid under proscription by

the archon Myrrichides. The unpopularity of this measure compelled the magistracy to open it again, when a powerful and exasperated triumvirate of authors retook possession of it, and all Athens flocked to the *Winter Amusements* of Cratinus, the *New Moons* of Eupolis, and the *Acharnensians* of our Aristophanes.

Can we wonder if these ingenious exiles made their persecutors smart under the lash of their wit and ridicule? It was *natural* at least that a race so irritable should retaliate upon their opponents, and avail themselves of the triumph they had gained, and the interest they had established with the people, who were to form their audiences. Of the three, Aristophanes was much the most moderate; this was remarked by Persius many ages after; and Horace says, they were only then severe, *Si quis erat dignus describi*.

Eupolis attacked the areopagite Autolycus in two several comedies, which he stamped with his name, and in which he personified him on the stage. He did the same by Alcibiades in his *Baptæ*, by Cimon in his *Lacedæmonians*, and by the orator Hyperbolus in his *Marica*. Characters so popular, so conspicuous and public as these, did not awe that daring poet. Cratinus did not fall short of him, either in talents or in the bold use he made of them. In a few years after these events of expulsion and subsequent restoration, Aristophanes wrote his first comedy of the *Clouds*, and in the following year this second of the same title, after the example of Eupolis, who observed the like periods in his first and second *Autolycus*.

Whether the philosophers were or were not fit objects of comic satire, must be left to your's and the reader's judgment; it is enough that war was declared between the poets and them, to make the consequences *natural*, which resulted from their animosity.

To convince you that Aristophanes was not the single champion of the comic corps, I must recal to your recollection the hostile proceedings of other leaders against the common enemy. Alexis made the life and actions of that impostor Pythagoras the foundation of an entire comedy; he also handled Plato very roughly in no less than four several dramas, notwithstanding the partiality of that philosopher, who wrote *love* epigrams upon him without softening his rancor, or receiving one kind smile in return.

Anaxandrides was another wicked wit, who not only vented his gall upon the divine Plato and the Academy, but also attacked the magistracy of Athens, who resented the satire so deeply, as to bring him to trial, and by one of the most cruel sentences upon record condemned him to be starved to death.

It was Plato's hard fate to fall under the lash of Epocrates also, who, in one of his plays, ridiculed the frivolous disquisitions of the Academy with great comic humor. Pythagoras again came under the stroke of Aristophon, who rallied him on his juggling tricks with great success.

Heniochus, the comic poet, brought Thorucion, a contemporary, to the dramatic halbert, and exhibited his character on the stage in a play, which he called after his name.

Plato, a poet of the same department, wrote a personal comedy against Cleophon the general. Pherecrates

lashed Alcibiades, and Hermippus lampooned Pericles. But Amipsias, a contemporary of Aristophanes, wrote a comedy intitled, "The Philosopher's Cloak," and was so audacious as to set up Socrates himself for the butt of his ridicule.

You see, therefore, that our author was not alone in his hostility against Socrates : the schools were in their turn silenced by authority, and some are hardy enough to say, that it would have been happy for the state, had they never again been suffered to teach. The Lacedæmonians were of that opinion, and took firm measures to prevent their settling amongst them : they did not seem to think any good end could be derived from their system of education ; they had no opinion of that ingenious logic, which *could make the worse appear the better reason* ; and they were anxious to preserve their native simple character from contamination : I am inclined to believe they were wiser in their generation than the people of Athens : certain it is, that this city was, in point of morals, extremely dissolute at the period when this comedy was acted, and yet it was then thronged with philosophers.

The unbounded applause bestowed upon the author of *The Clouds*, and the unanimous decree in his favor, above all his competitors, seem to bespeak no very partial disposition in his audience towards the objects of his ridicule ; whatever might have been the merit of his comedy in point of wit, had there been absolutely no foundation for his satire, but mere rancor and malice, the attack would have been too barefaced to be endured ; and had Aristophanes been suborned by Anytus and Melitus, as Ælian suggests, is it to be supposed they would not have seized

the favorable moment of his triumph to have pushed their suit against Socrates? I think therefore, without affecting to justify the personality of the piece, we may fairly presume that the author was no otherwise actuated than by the spirit of the corps for raillery and retaliation, and having, like his brother poets, resolved upon turning out against the philosophers, he boldly took his aim at the most illustrious champion of their order.

I am now to solicit your favorable perusal of my performance, which I doubt not but you will read with all candid allowances for the many difficulties I have had to surmount, of all which you are so perfect a judge. I flatter myself you will find it faithful to the original, and as close as the languages can be made to approach, without violating the harmony of the metre, or that free air of originality, which every translator should make it his endeavour to preserve; in short, if you shall perceive that I have been duly attentive to your own admirable rules, which it has been my earnest study to pursue, I shall esteem it the most flattering presage of success with the rest of my readers.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your much obliged,

and most obedient Servant,

RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

Dramatis Personae.

STREPSIADES.

PHIDIPPIDES.

SERVANT *to* STREPSIADES.

DISCIPLES *of* SOCRATES.

SOCRATES.

CHORUS *of* CLOUDS.

DICÆUS, *or the* JUST Character.

ADICUS, *or the* UNJUST.

PASIAS.

AMYNIAS.

WITNESSES.

CHÆREPHON.

SCENE—~~A~~ATHENS.

THE CLOUDS.

(*Strepsiades is discovered in his chamber, Phidippides sleeping in his bed. Time, before break of day.*)

Strep. AH me, ah me! will this night never end?
Oh kingly Jove, shall there be no more day?
And yet the cock sung out long time ago;
I heard him—but my people lie and snore,
Snore in defiance, for the rascals know
It is their ^a privilege in time of war,
Which with its other plagues brings this upon us,
That we mayn't rouse these vermin with a cudgel.
There's my young hopeful too, he sleeps it through,
Snug under five fat blankets at the least.
Would I could sleep so sound! but my poor eyes
Have no sleep in them; what with debts and duns
And stable-keepers' bills, which this fine-spark
Heaps on my back, I lie awake the whilst:^c
And what cares he but to coil up his locks,
Ride, drive his horses, dream of them all night,

^a The Athenians had granted them certain exemptions for their services on board the fleet in the Lacedæmonian war.

Whilst I, poor devil, may go hang—for now
 The moon¹ in her last quarter wains apace,
 And my usurious creditors are gaping.
 What ho! a light! bring me my tablets, boy!
 That I may set down all, and sum them up,
 Debts, creditors, and interest upon interest—

[*Boy enters with a light and tablets.*]

Let me see where I am and what the total—
 Twelve pounds² to Pasiās—Hah! to Pasiās twelve!
 Out on it, and for what? A horse forsooth,
 Right noble by the mark³—Curse on such marks!
 Would I had giv'n this eye from out this head,
 Ere I had paid the purchase of this jennet!

Phidip. Shame on you, Philo!—Keep within your ring.

Streps. There 'tis! that's it! the bane of all my peace—
 He's racing in his sleep.

Phidip. A heat—a heat!

How many turns to a heat?

Streps. More than enough;

¹ The term for enforcing payments and taking out execution against debtors, according to usage, was in near approach.

² The Athenian pound was of the value of one hundred drachmas, and each drachma of six oboli. The pound may be computed at three of our's, which gives the price of the horse about 36*l.*

³ In the original the mark is pointed out to have been that of the *koppa*, whence these horses were called *koppatiæ*, as those stamped with the *sigma* were named *samphoræ*. The *bucephali* had the mark of the ox's head, and probably Alexander's favorite charger was of this sort.

You've giv'n me turns in plenty—I am jaded.
 But to my list—What name stands next to Pasias?
 Amynias¹—three good pounds—still for the race—
 A chariot² mounted on its wheels complete.

Phidip. Dismount! unharness and away!

Streps. I thank you;
 You have unharness'd me: I am dismounted,
 And with a vengeance—All my goods in pawn,
 Fines, forfeitures, and penalties in plenty.

Phidip. (*wakes.*) My father! why so restless? who has
 vex'd you?

Streps. The sheriff³ vexes me; he breaks my rest.

Phidip. Peace, self-tormenter, let me sleep!

Streps. Sleep on!

But take this with you; all these debts of mine
 Will double on your head: a plague confound
 That cursed match-maker, who drew me in
 To wed, forsooth, that precious dam of thine.
 I liv'd at ease in the country, coarsely clad,

¹ Aminias was the archon when this comedy was acted, and the poet makes use of his name in the way of ridicule, spelling it however *Amynias* instead of Aminias. At length the persons of the archons were, by a special law, protected from ridicule and detraction.

² The chariot or curricie here alluded to was built extremely light, with a seat for the driver, and wheels of a stated construction, for the race. The price annexed to it bespeaks it to have been of slight and simple workmanship.

³ The Athenian *demarchus*, here rendered *sheriff*, had, amongst many popular concerns, the custody of all goods pledged to creditors.

Rough, free, and full withal as oil and honey
 And store of stock could fill me, till I took,
 Clown as I was, this limb of the Alcmaeon's,¹
 This vain, extravagant, high-blooded dame:
 Rare bed-fellows and dainty—were we not?
 I, smelling of the wine-vat, figs and fleeces,
 The produce of my farm, all essence she,²
 Saffron and harlot's kisses, paint and washes,
 A pamper'd wanton—Idle I'll not call her;
 She took due pains in faith to work my ruin,
 Which made me tell her, pointing to this cloak,
 Now thread-bare on my shoulders—see, good wife,
 This is your work—in troth you toil too hard.

[*Boy re-enters.*]

Boy. Master, the lamp has drank up all its oil.

¹ Strepsiades says he married his wife out of the family of Megacles, descended from Alcmaeon, and one of the first nobility in Athens.

² This is one of many passages in this author, where the language of translation cannot be made to embrace the full spirit of the original. Strepsiades, describing the character of his wife as contrasted with himself, says (in the phrase of Eretria) that she was *ἑγκελοισυζωμένην*, lavish in the ornaments of her person as Cæsyra, *made up* by all the artifice of the toilette, (or in one word *Cæsyrafied*.) There were two ladies of this name, one the wife of Alcmaeon, the other of Pisistratus, and as Strepsiades has already placed his wife in the family of the former, it seems most likely that his ridicule points at the elder Cæsyra, though both were examples equally apposite.

Streps. Aye, 'tis a drunken lamp; the more fault your's;
Whelp, you shall howl for this.

Boy. Why? for what fault?

Streps. For cramming such a greedy wick with oil.

[*Exit Boy.*]

Well! in good time this hopeful heir was born;
Then I and my beloved fell to wrangling
About the naming of the brat—My wife
Would dub her colt Xanthippus or Charippus,¹
Or it might be Callipides, she car'd not
So 'twere a horse, which shar'd the name—but I
Stuck for his grandfather Phidonides;
At last when neither could prevail, the matter
Was compromis'd by calling him Phidippides:
Then she began to fondle her sweet babe,
And taking him by th' hand—lambkin, she cried,
When thou art some years older thou shalt drive,
Megacles-like, thy chariot to the city,
Rob'd in a saffron mantle—No, quoth I,
Not so, my boy, but thou shalt drive thy goats,
When thou art able, from the fields of Phelle,²

¹ In all these names of the wife's proposing she keeps her own family in view. Xanthippus and Charippus are proper names; the first was the father of Pericles; Callias was an Olympic victor, and that she ingeniously compounds. The name Phidonides, which Strepsiades contends for, is a compounded term, that implies a *man addicted to parsimony*; the compromise therefore for Phidippides is so contrived as to suit both parties.

² A rocky district of Attica, which afforded pasturage only to goats,

Clad in a woollen jacket like thy father :
 But he is deaf to all these frugal rules,
 And drives me on the gallop to my ruin ;
 Therefore all night I call my thoughts to council,
 And after long debate find one chance left,
 To which if I can lead him, all is safe,
 If not—but soft ? 'tis time that I should wake him.
 But how to soothe him to the task—Phidippides !
 Precious Phidippides !

Phidip. What now, my father ?

Streps. Kiss me, my boy ! reach me thine hand—

Phidip. Declare,

What would you ?

Streps. Dost thou love me, sirrah ? speak !

Phidip. Aye, by equestrian Neptune !

Streps. Name not him,

Name not that charioteer ; he is my bane,

The source of all my sorrow—but, my son,

If thou dost love me, prove it by obedience.

Phidip. In what must I obey ?

Streps. Reform your habits ;

Quit them at once, and what I shall prescribe

That do !

Phidip. And what is it that you prescribe ?

Streps. But wilt thou do't ?

Phidip. Yea, by Dionysus !¹

¹ The poet is duly attentive to character in these asseverations, which he puts into the mouth of his young man, making him first swear by *equestrian Neptune*, and when driven from that, resorting to Dionysus, the patron of the feast now in

Streps. 'Tis well : get up ! come hither, boy ; look out !
Yon little wicket and the hut hard by—
Do'st see them ?

Phidip. Clearly. What of that same hut ?

Streps. Why that's the council-chamber of all wisdom :
There the choice spirits dwell, who teach the world
That heav'n's great concave is one mighty oven,
And men its burning embers : these are they,
Who can show pleaders how to twist a cause,¹
So you'll but pay them for it, right or wrong.

Phidip. And how do you call them ?

Streps. Troth I know not that,²

actual celebration, called the Dionysia: this was also the more apposite, as it was now this very comedy was in representation. I have therefore accorded to the original term, in preference to that of Bacchus, which Brunck and other translators have adopted. ,

¹ How cunningly the poet slides in his satire before he betrays the personality attached to it ! He exposes the doctrines, before he gives the names, of these philosophers, and those doctrines he describes to be of that species of sophistry, by which men are taught to evade the laws, and defraud their creditors, than which there cannot well be any greater offence against society.

² It is worth a remark, that to this question of the son, the rustic father pleads ignorance, by which the poet artfully transfers the first naming of Socrates and Chærephon from that person, who must have spoken of them respectfully to him, who now announces them to the audience with all the contempt and obloquy peculiar to his character. This is one

But they are men, who take a world of pains ;
Wond'rous good men and able.

Phidip. Out upon 'em !

Poor rogues, I know them now ; you mean those scabs,
Those squalid, barefoot, beggarly impostors,
The mighty cacodæmons of whose sect
Are Socrates and Chærephon.¹ Away !

Streps. Hush, hush ! be still ; don't vent such foolish
prattle ;

But if you'll take my counsel, join their college
And quit your riding school.

Phidip. Not I, so help me
Dionysus our patron ! though you brib'd me
With all the racers that Leogarus
Breeds from his Phasian² stud.

amongst many instances of the poet's address, which the critic cannot fail to discover in this opening scene.

¹ Had it happily so chanced, that the first comedy of *The Clouds* had been preserved, it would have been a most gratifying circumstance to have traced the author's contrivances for turning his experience of a past miscarriage to account in a second attempt. I think it highly probable that this of coupling Chærephon with Socrates was one of his expedients to avoid the shock of bringing him too abruptly before the audience ; and though no management might serve for bringing over his determined supporters, yet by grounding his attack upon the principles of universal justice, and classing him with an associate so contemptible as Chærephon, nicknamed " the Bat," he takes the likeliest means of interesting the audience in general for his comedy.

² Whether the *φασιανὴ* are to be understood literally as

Streps. Dear, darling lad,
Prythee be rul'd, and learn.

Phidip. What shall I learn?

Streps. They have a choice of logic; this for justice,^a
That for injustice: learn that latter art,
And all these creditors, that now beset me,
Shall never touch a drachm that I owe them.

Phidip. I'll learn of no such masters, nor be made
A scare-crow and a may-game to my comrades:
I have no zeal for starving.

Streps. No, nor I
For feasting you and your fine pamper'd cattle
At free cost any longer—Horse and foot
To the crows I bequeath you. So be gone.

Phidip. Well, sir, I have an uncle rich and noble;
Megacles will not let me be unhors'd;

pheasants, or as horses so described, is a disputed point with the grammarians. Leogarus was famous for his breed of horses; he was also a notorious glutton; his character of course accords to each interpretation. I have inclined to the latter, as thinking it more in character of the speaker, and as I find the country on the banks of the Phasis celebrated for its breed of horses, I prefer that construction to any other.

^a The great aim of this comedy is to hold up to ridicule and detestation that Socratic mode of arguing by quirk and quibble, which is here termed the unjust, and elsewhere the new, sophistry. As this will be brought into full discussion in a subsequent scene, I shall postpone any further remarks for the present.

To him I go : I'll trouble you no longer. ¹ [Exit.

Streps. (alone.) He has thrown me to the ground, but
I'll not lie there ;

¹ The poet in this opening scene exhibits a considerable share of dramatic skill and contrivance : it develops just as much of the fable, as is proper for the audience to be apprised of, and prepares them for the introduction of the principal character after a very artful manner. The intervention of the servant boy, first with the tablets, and next with his report of the lamp, together with the speakings of Phidippides in his sleep, are pleasantly and ingeniously thrown in to break the soliloquies of the old man, whose story, though humorously told, would else be too long in detail. The part, which the son holds in the scene, is also very characteristic, and his sallies in his dream (in which the author seems to have Æschylus in his eye) have a great deal of point and stage effect. The same may be remarked of the art observed in introducing the first mention of Socrates and his school, and the explanation Strepsiades gives of the purposes, for which he would have his son resort thither. The base nature of those purposes and the abhorrence of the young man are cunning preparatives for the introduction of Socrates, and for biassing the spectators in favour of the personal attack, which the poet is now meditating against that eminent philosopher. The attempt was daring, and had once already failed ; warned by this miscarriage, he now lays his plan with more precaution, and it is not easy to conceive any better generalship than he displays upon this second attack. If there is any thing in this scene open to critical reprehension, I conceive it to be that the speakings of Strepsiades are of a higher cast here than in his

I'll up, and with permission of the gods
 Try if I cannot learn these arts myself :
 But being old, sluggish, and dull of wit,
 How am I sure these subtleties won't pose me ?
 Well ! I'll attempt it : what avails complaint ?
 Why don't I knock and enter ?—Hoa ! within there !—

(Knocks violently at the door ; a disciple calls out from within.)

Disciple. Go hang yourself ! and give the crows a dinner—

What noisy fellow art thou at the door ?

Streps. Strepsiades of Cicynna, son of Phidon.¹

Disciple. Whoe'er thou art, 'fore Heaven, thou art a fool

Not to respect these doors ; battering so loud,
 And kicking with such vengeance, you have marr'd
 The ripe conception of my pregnant brain,
 And brought on a miscarriage.

Streps. Oh ! the pity—

Pardon my ignorance : I'm country bred
 And far a-field am come : I pray you tell me
 What curious thought my luckless din has strangled,

succeeding dialogues with Socrates, where the poet (for the sake no doubt of contrasting his rusticity with the finesse of the philosopher) has lowered him to the stile and sentiment of an arrant clown. Of this the reader will be able to judge as he advances ; but I dare say the humor of the dialogue will atone for any small departure from uniformity of character, if any such in fact does exist.

¹ A citizen of the tribe of Acamas.

Just as your brain was hatching.

Disciple. These are things

We never speak of but amongst ourselves.

Streps. Speak boldly then to me, for I am come
To be amongst you, and partake the secrets
Of your profound academy.

Disciple. Enough!

I will impart, but set it down in thought
Amongst our mysteries—This is the question,
As it was put but now to Chærephon,
By our great master Socrates, to answer—
How many of his own lengths at one spring
A flea can hop—for we did see one vault
From Chærephon's ¹ black eye-brow to the head
Of the philosopher.

Streps. And how did t'other
Contrive to measure this?

Disciple. Most accurately:
He dipt the insect's feet in melted wax,
Which, hard'ning into sandals as it cool'd,
Gave him the space by rule infallible.

Streps. Imperial Jove! what subtilty of thought!

Disciple. But there's a deeper question yet behind;
What would you say to that?

Streps. I pray, impart it.

Disciple. 'Twas put to Socrates, if he could say,

¹ Chærephon was swarthy, and on that account, as well as for his shrill and querulous speech, nicknamed *the Bat*. Socrates was bald.

When a gnat humm'd, whether the sound did issue
From mouth or tail.

Streps. Aye; marry, what said he?

Disciple. He said your gnat doth blow his trumpet
backwards

From a sonorous cavity within him,
Which being fill'd with breath, and forc'd along
The narrow pipe or rectum of his body,
Doth vent itself in a loud hum behind.

Streps. Hah! then I see the podex of your gnat
Is trumpet-fashion'd—Oh! the blessings on him
For this discovery; well may he escape
The law's strict scrutiny, who thus developes¹
The anatomy of a gnat.

Disciple. Nor is this all;
Another grand experiment was blasted
By a curst cat.

Streps. As how, good sir; discuss?

Disciple. One night as he was gazing at the moon,
Curious and all intent upon her motions,
A cat on the house ridge was at her needs,
And squirted in his face.

Streps. Beshrew her for it!
Yet I must laugh no less to think a cat
Should so bespatter Socrates.

Disciple. Last night
We were bilk'd of our supper.

¹ The dramatic critic will see the point of this inference,
and give the poet credit for it.

Streps. Were you so ?

What did your master substitute instead ?

Disciple. Why to say truth, he sprinkled a few ashes
Upon the board, then with a little broach,
Crook'd for the nonce, pretending to describe
A circle, neatly filch'd away a cloak.

Streps. Why talk we then of Thales ?¹ Open to me,
Open the school, and let me see your master :²
I am on fire to enter—Come, unbar !

(The School is disclosed.)

¹ It was a custom with Aristophanes to call a man, who was devoted to astronomical studies, a *Thales*. We are therefore to understand that Socrates is represented as engaging the attention of his pupils by some astronomical schemes, traced out on the table, whilst he took the opportunity of purloining a cloak. This would have been a very dangerous joke for the poet to have risqued, if some such idle stories had not been in circulation ; but this was the case, and other authors are quoted as having made the same charge.

² Aristophanes well knew how impossible it was for the friends of Socrates to stem the laugh of a theatre ; he perfectly understood the use of that weapon, which in his hands was so formidable, and devotes the whole preceding scene to ridicule of that farcical kind, which was so well adapted to the false taste of the Athenians, to whom even the grossest buffooneries were acceptable. Having therefore in his first scene set out by stating the iniquitous sophistry of the Socratic school, he next proceeds to ridicule their frivolous inquiries and experiments, and with this view introduces a disciple, who, with much solemnity, is made to betray the secrets of

O Hercules, defend me ! who are these ?

What kind of cattle have we here in view ?

Disciple. Where is the wonder ? What do they resemble ?

Streps. Methinks they're like our Spartan prisoners,
Captur'd at Pylos. What are they in search of ?

Why are their eyes so rivetted to th' earth ?

Disciple. There their researches center.

Streps. 'Tis for onions¹

They are in quest—Come, lads, give o'er your search ;

I'll show you what you want, a noble plat,

All round and sound—but soft ! what mean those gentry,

Who dip their heads so low ?

Disciple. Marry, because

Their studies lead that way : They are now diving

To the dark realms of Tartarus and Night.

Streps. But why are all their cruppers mounted up ?

Disciple. To practise them in star-gazing, and teach
them

Their proper elevations—but no more :

Come, fellow-students, let us hence, or ere

The master comes—

his master, and to tell such tales to the disgrace of his philosophy, and even of his honesty, as are calculated, with the aid of the old man's comments, to raise a laugh against Socrates, just in the moment when he is prepared to open the scene of his academy, and exhibit his person in the most ridiculous attitude his fancy could devise.

¹ He had before said they were like the Lacedæmonian prisoners, emaciated and half-starved, he therefore supposes them on the search for food and not for science.

Streps. Nay, prythee let 'em stay,
And be of council with me in my business.

Disciple. Impossible ; they cannot give the time.

Streps. Now for the love of Heav'n, what have we
here ?

Explain their uses to me. (*observing the apparatus.*)

Disciple. This machine
Is for astronomy—

Streps. And this ?

Disciple. For geometry.

Streps. As how ?

Disciple. For measuring the earth.

Streps. Indeed !

What by the lot ?

Disciple. No, faith, Sir, by the lump ;
Ev'n the whole globe at once.

Streps. Well said, in troth.

A quaint device, and made for general use.

Disciple. Look now, this line marks the circumference
Of the whole earth, d'ye see—This spot is Athens—

Streps. Athens ! go to, I see no courts are sitting ;¹
Therefore I can't believe you.

Disciple. Nay, in truth,
This very tract is Attica.

Streps. And where,
Where is my own Cicynna ?

¹ This is the same sort of reproach, which Demosthenes afterwards made use of. Their character, in short, was frivolous, and their caprice unpardonable. This whole scene is raillery of a serious sort, and in this place, where it was so much his interest to keep up the laugh, unsuitably applied.

Disciple. Here it lies :
 And this Eubœa —Mark ! how far it runs—
Streps. How far it runs ! Yes, Pericles has made it
 Run far enough from us—Where's Lacedæmon ?
Disciple. Here ; close to Athens.
Streps. Ah ! how much too close—
 Prythee, good friends, take that bad neighbour from us.
Disciple. That's not for us to do.
Streps. The worse luck your's !
 But look ! who's this suspended in a basket ?¹

(*Socrates is discovered.*)

Disciple. This, this is he.
Streps. What he ?
Disciple. Why, Socrates.
Streps. Hah ! Socrates ?—Make up to him and roar,
 Bid him come down ; roar lustily.
Disciple. Not I :
 Do it yourself ; I've other things to mind. [Exit.
Streps. Hoa ! Socrates—What hoa, my little Socrates ! 2 2 2
Socr. Mortal, how now !² Thou insect of a day,

¹ It is clear that the philosopher does not remain suspended in his basket during the preceding scene, because the disciple warns away his fellow-students, lest their master should discover them. If the poet had spared his politics about Eubœa and Lacedæmon, I should conceive his audience might have been in a better humor for receiving an incident of so singular and daring a sort, as the débüt of the philosopher in a basket ; but no doubt he knew the people he had to deal with.

² To give the philosopher a mock sublimity, he elevates him above the heads of his fellow-creatures by the vehicle of

What would'st thou ?

Streps. I would know what thou art doing.

Socr. I tread in air, contemplating the sun.

Streps. Ah, then I see you're basketed so high,
That you look down upon the Gods—Good hope,
You'll lower a peg on earth.

Socr. Sublime in air,
Sublime in thought I carry my mind with me,
Its cogitations all assimilated
To the pure atmosphere, in which I float ;
Lower me to earth, and my mind's subtle powers,
Seiz'd by contagious dulness, lose their spirit ;
For the dry earth drinks up the generous sap,
The vegetating vigor of philosophy,
And leaves it a mere husk.

Streps. What do you say ?
Philosophy has sapt your vigor ? Fie upon it.
But come, my precious fellow, come down quickly,
And teach me those fine things I'm here in quest of.

Socr. And what fine things are they ?

Streps. A new receipt
For sending off my creditors, and foiling them
By the art logical ; for you shall know
By debts, pawns, pledges, usuries, executions,
I am rackt and rent in tatters.

Socr. Why permit it ?
What strange infatuation seiz'd your senses ?

a basket, and then makes him speak in a stile correspondent to the loftiness of his station, a language suited to the character of a demigod.

Streps. The horse consumption, a devouring plague;
But so you'll enter me amongst your scholars,
And tutor me like them to bilk my creditors,
Name your own price, and by the Gods I swear
I'll pay you the last drachm.

Socr. By what Gods?

Answer that first; for your Gods are not mine.

Streps. How swear you then? ¹ As the Byzantians swear
By their base iron coin?

Socr. Art thou ambitious
To be instructed in celestial matters,
And taught to know them clearly?

¹ This whole dialogue, between two characters so forcibly contrasted, is conceived in the very best stile of the author. That this eminent philosopher was not an orthodox heathen, may well be believed; that the poet himself was not less of a free-thinker, may fairly be inferred from a variety of passages in his surviving comedies, where the Deities and even Jupiter himself are treated with so little ceremony, or rather with such sovereign contempt, that we must suppose no danger was attached to the avowal of these free opinions, and of course no serious design to entrap the life of Socrates by this raillery could be in the contemplation of Aristophanes at the time. It seems to be nothing more than a mere vehicle for introducing his chorus of fanciful beings, in like manner with those of his *frogs*, *birds*, and *wasps*, which are all cast in the same whimsical characters with this of *The Clouds*. It is, however, a very apposite allusion of the clown, when he asks him if he swears, as the Byzantians do, by the beggarly oath of their own base coining.

Streps. Marry am I,

So they be to my purpose, and celestial.

Socr. What, if I bring you to a conference
With my own proper Goddesses, the Clouds?

Streps. 'Tis what I wish devoutly.

Socr. Come, sit down;

Repose yourself upon this couch.

Streps. 'Tis done.

Socr. Now take this chaplet—wear it.

Streps. Why this chaplet?

Would'st make of me another Athamas,¹

And sacrifice me to a cloud?

Socr. Fear nothing;

It is a ceremony indispensable

At all initiations.

Streps. What to gain?

Socr. 'Twill sift your faculties as fine as powder,
Bolt 'em like meal, grind 'em as light as dust;
Only be patient.

Streps. Marry, you'll go near
To make your words good; an' you pound me thus
You'll make me very dust and nothing else.

(*Anapests.*)

Socr. Keep silence then, and listen to a prayer,
Which fits the gravity of age to hear—
Oh! Air, all powerful Air, which dost enfold
This pendant globe, thou vault of flaming gold,

¹ Rescued by Hercules, when on the point of being immolated to the manes of Phryxus.

Ye sacred Clouds, who bid the thunder roll,
Shine forth, approach, and cheer your suppliant's soul!

Streps. Hold, keep 'em off awhile, till I am ready.
Ah! luckless me, wou'd I had brought my bonnet,
And so escap'd a soaking.

Socr. Come, come away!
Fly swift, ye clouds, and give yourselves to view!
Whether on high Olympus' sacred top
Snow-crown'd ye sit, or in the azure vales
Of your own father Ocean sporting weave
Your misty dance, or dip your golden urns
In the seven mouths of Nile; whether ye dwell
On Thracian Mimas, or Mœotis' lake,
Hear me, yet hear, and thus invok'd approach!

Chorus of Clouds. Ascend, ye watery Clouds, on high,
Daughters of Ocean, climb the sky,
And o'er the mountain's pine-cap't brow
Towering your fleecy mantle throw:
Thence let us scan the wide-stretch'd scene,
Groves, lawns, and rilling streams between,
And stormy Neptune's vast expanse,
And grasp all nature at a glance.
Now the dark tempest flits away,
And lo! the glittering orb of day
Darts forth his clear etherial beam,
Come let us snatch the joyous gleam.

Socr. Yes, ye Divinities, whom I adore,
I hail you now propitious to my prayer.
Did'st thou not hear them speak in thunder to me?¹

¹ After Socrates has performed his solemn incantation, the Clouds give sign of their approach by thunder, and, that

Streps. And I too am your Cloudships' most obedient,
 And under sufferance trump against your thunder :
 Nay, take it how you may, my frights and fears
 Have pinch'd and cholick'd my poor bowels so,
 That I can't chuse but treat your holy nostrils
 With an unsavory sacrifice.

Socr. Forbear

These gross scurrilities, for low buffoons
 And mountebanks more fitting. Hush ! be still,
 List to the chorus of their heavenly voices,
 For music is the language they delight in.

Chorus of Clouds. Ye Clouds, replete with fruitful
 showers,

Here let us seek Minerva's towers,
 The cradle of old Cecrops' race,
 The world's chief ornament and grace ;
 Here mystic fanes and rites divine
 And lamps in sacred splendor shine ;
 Here the Gods dwell in marble domes,
 Feasted with costly hecatombs,
 That round their votive statues blaze,
 Whilst crowded temples ring with praise ;
 And pompous sacrifices here
 Make holidays throughout the year,
 And when gay spring-time comes again,
 Bromius convokes his sportive train,

ceasing, they chant their lyric ode in the stile of Archilochus,
 as they are supposed to be descending towards the earth,
 and as yet out of sight. The effect of this was probably very
 striking.

And pipe and song and choral dance

Hail the soft hours as they advance.

Streps. Now in the name of Jove I pray thee tell me
Who are these ranting dames, that talk in stilts?
Of the Amazonian cast no doubt.

Socr. Not so,
No dames, but clouds celestial, friendly powers
To men of sluggish parts ; from these we draw
Sense, apprehension, volubility,
Wit to confute, and cunning to ensnare.

Streps. Aye, therefore 'twas that my heart leapt within
me

For very sympathy when first I heard 'em :
Now I could prattle shrewdly of first causes,
And spin out metaphysic cobwebs finely,
And dogmatize most rarely, and dispute
And paradox it with the best of you :
So, come what may, I must and will behold 'em ;
Show me their faces I conjure you.

Socr. Look,
Look towards Mount Parnes as I point—There, there !
Now they descend the hill ; I see them plainly
As plain as can be.

Streps. Where, where ? I prythee, show me.

Socr. Here ! a whole troop of them thro' woods and
hollows,
A bye-way of their own.

Streps. What ails my eyes,
That I can't catch a glimpse of them ?

Socr. Behold !
Here at the very entrance—

Streps. Never trust me,
If yet I see them clearly.

Socr. Then you must be
Sand-blind or worse.

Streps. Nay, now by father Jove,¹
I cannot chuse but see them—precious creatures!
For in good faith here's plenty and to spare.

(*Chorus of Clouds enter.*)

Socr. And didst thou doubt if they were goddesses?

Streps. Not I, so help me! only I'd a notion
That they were fog, and dew, and dusky vapor.

Socr. For shame! why, man, these are the nursing
mothers
Of all our famous sophists, fortune-tellers,
Quacks,² med'cine-mongers, bards bombastical,

¹ There is more *play* in this dialogue upon the introduction of the chorus than is generally to be found in the dry and simple conduct of the Greek drama. The magic powers and solemn style of the philosophy, the coarse rusticity and comic credulity of Strepsiades, with the chorus first heard in the air, then after a long and tantalizing expectation, brought personally on the stage as a troop of damsels, habited no doubt in character, and floating *cloud-like* in the dance, whilst the dialogue proceeds explanatory on the part of Socrates, are all contrived with much address, and with great attention to spectacle and stage effect.

² The groupe Socrates here gives us of *cloud-inspired* worthies has great comic point; it is the reply of sophistry to common sense, which had struck upon the truth in a very natural solution of their properties, supposing them to be *fog* and *vapor*. It is an answer so contrived as to recoil upon himself.

Chorus projectors, star interpreters
 And wonder-making cheats—The gang of idlers,
 Who pay them for their feeding with good store
 Of flattery and mouth-worship.

Streps. Now I see

Whom we may thank for driving them along
 At such a furious dithyrambic ¹ rate,
 Sun-shadowing clouds of many-color'd hues,
 Air-rending tempests, hundred-headed Typhons;
 Now rousing, rattling them about our ears,
 Now gently wafting them adown the sky,
 Moist, airy, bending, bursting into showers;
 For all which fine descriptions the poor knaves
 Dine daintily on scraps.

Socr. And proper fare;
 What better do they merit?

Streps. Under favor,
 If these be clouds, (d'you mark me?) very clouds,
 How came they metamorphos'd into women?
 Clouds are not such as these.

Socr. And what else are they?

Streps. Troth, I can't rightly tell, but I should guess
 Something like flakes of wool, not women sure;
 And loôk! these dames have noses—

¹ This rant is glanced at the dithyrambic writers, and Suidas says it points particularly at Philoxenus, whose compound epithets are here retailed in ridicule of his bombast and turgid diction. The satire is fair, but perhaps the old clown is not strictly the person who should be the vehicle of it.

Socr. Hark you, friend,
I'll put a question to you.

Streps. Out with it!
Be quick : let's have it.

Socr. This it is in short—
Hast thou ne'er seen a cloud, which thou could'st fancy
Shap'd like a centaur, leopard, wolf or bull?

Streps. Yea, marry, have I, and what then?

Socr. Why then
Clouds can assume what shapes they will, believe me ;
For instance ; shou'd they spy some hairy clown
Rugged and rough and like the unlick't cub¹
Of Xenophantes, strait they turn to centaurs,
And kick at him for vengeance.

Streps. Well done, Clouds?
But should they spy that peculating knave,
Simon,² that public thief, how would they treat him?

Socr. As wolves—in character most like his own.

Streps. Aye, there it is now, when they saw Cleonymus,³
That dastard run-away, they turn'd to hinds
In honor of his cowardice.

¹ Hieronymus, the dithyrambic poet, son of Xenophantes, is here aimed at : The original passage specifies an unnatural vice, which the clouds very appositely mark under the appearance of libidinous centaurs.

² Simon the sophist is satyriized also by Eupolis for his great and notorious public frauds.

³ Cleonymus had incurred the infamy of throwing away his shield in battle, and betaking himself to flight ; the poet marks the affair as recent, and treats it with proportionable severity.

Socr. And now,
Having seen Clisthenes,¹ to mock his lewdness
They change themselves to women.

Streps. Welcome, ladies!
Imperial ladies, welcome! An' it please
Your Highnesses so far to grace a mortal,
Give me a touch of your celestial voices.

Chor. Hail, grandsire! who at this late hour of life
Would'st go to school for cunning, and all hail,
Thou prince pontifical of quirks and quibbles,
Speak thy full mind, make known thy wants and wishes?
Thee and our worthy Prodicus² excepted,
Not one of all your sophists have our ear:
Him for his wit and learning we esteem,
Thee for thy proud deportment and high looks,
In barefoot beggary strutting up and down,
Content to suffer mockery for our sake,

¹ Clisthenes was a character so contemptibly effeminate and vicious withal, that the impurity of his manners became proverbial. We find him in a fragment of Cratinus, and in other passages of our author. In this place he is peculiarly well brought in, and helps Socrates to a very ingenious solution of the question put to him by Strepsiades, how his Clouds came to be metamorphosed into women.

² A famous sophist, native of Ceos, and a disciple of Protagoras, founder of the title, whose writings were condemned to the flames by decree of the Athenians: the fate of Prodicus was more severe, inasmuch as he was put to death by poison, as a teacher of doctrines which corrupted the youth of Athens. There was something prophetic in thus grouping him with Socrates.

And carry a grave face whilst others laugh.

Streps. Oh! mother earth, was ever voice like this,
So reverend, so portentous, so divine?

Socr. These are your only deities, all else
I flout at.

Streps. Hold! Olympian Jupiter—
Is he no god?

Socr. What Jupiter?¹ what God?
Prythee no more—away with him at once.

Streps. Say'st thou? who gives us rain? answer me that.

Socr. These give us rain; as I will strait demonstrate:
Come on now—When did you e'er see it rain
Without a cloud? If Jupiter gives rain,
Let him rain down his favors in the sunshine,²
Nor ask the clouds to help him.

Streps. You have hit it,
'Tis so; heav'n help me, I did think till now,
When t'was his godship's pleasure, he made water

¹ Here is a strong assertion grafted on the character of Socrates, but the levity it is introduced with, and the ridiculous comments Strepsiades makes upon it, argue no peculiar malice in the intention.

² The scholiast in his note upon this passage, gives us an allusion to a story of a certain Myscelus, who upon consulting the oracle, was directed to found a city in that very spot, where he should be caught in a shower whilst the sky was clear. Despairing of an event so unnatural, he had the address to interpret the tears of his mistress as the fulfilment of the oracle, and proceeded to complete his project accordingly.

Into a sieve and gave the earth a shower.
But, hark'ye me, who thunders? tell me that;
For then it is I tremble.

Socr. These, these thunder,
When they are tumbled.

Streps. How, blasphemer, how?

Socr. When they are charg'd with vapors full to th'
bursting,

And bandied to and fro against each other,
Then with the shock they burst and crack amain.

Streps. And who is he that jowls them thus together
But Jove himself?

Socr. Jove! 'tis not Jove that does it,
But the ætherial vortex.¹

Streps. What is he?
I never heard of him; is he not Jove?
Or is Jove put aside and Vortex crown'd
King of Olympus in his state and place?
But let me learn some more of this same thunder.

Socr. Have you not learnt? I told you how the clouds,
Being surcharg'd with vapor, rush together
And in the conflict shake the poles with thunder.

¹ The *ætherial vortex*, αἰθέριος δῖνος is referable to the philosopher Anaxagoras, and it is a general remark, which the reader should bear in mind, that all the satire bestowed upon the character of Socrates in this comedy is not pointed personally, but through his vehicle at various sophists and philosophers, as they fall in the poet's way: Socrates was known to direct all his studies to morality, and to rescue his philosophy from abstruse researches, as Cicero testifies.

Streps. But who believes you?

Socr. You, as I shall prove it:

Mark the Panathenæa, where you cram
Your belly full of pottage; if you shake
And stir it lustily about—what then?

Streps. Marry, why then it gives a desperate crack;
It bounces like a thunderbolt, the pottage
Keeps such a coil within me—At the first
Pappax it cries—anon with double force,
Papappax!—when at length *Papapappax*
From forth my sounding entrails thund'ring bursts.

Socr. Think then, if so your belly trumpets forth,
How must the vasty vault of heaven resound,
When the clouds crack with thunder.

Streps. Let that pass,
And tell me of the lightning, whose quick flash
Burns us to cinders; that at least great Jove
Keeps in reserve to launch at perjury.

Socr. Dunce, dotard! were you born before the flood
To talk of perjury, whilst Simon breathes,¹
Theorus and Cleonymus, whilst they,
Thrice-perjur'd villains, brave the lightning's stroke,
And gaze the heav'ns unscorch't? Would these escape?
Why, man, Jove's random fires strike his own fane,
Strike Sunium's guiltless top, strike the dumb oak,
Who never yet broke faith or falsely swore.

Streps. It may be so, good sooth! You talk this well,

¹ Lucretius has dilated this thought into two very fine passages, in his sixth book, v. 386.—v. 416.

But I would fain be taught the natural cause
Of these appearances.

Socr. Mark when the winds,
In their free courses check'd, are pent and purs'd
As 'twere within a bladder, stretching then
And struggling for expansion, they burst forth
With crack so fierce as sets the air on fire.

Streps. The devil they do! why now the murder's out :
So was I serv'd with a damn'd paunch, I broil'd
On Jove's day last, just such a scurvy trick ;
Because forsooth, not dreaming of your thunder,
I never thought to give the rascal vent,
Bounce! goes the bag, and covers me all over
With filth and ordure till my eyes struck fire.

*Chor.*¹ The envy of all Athens shalt thou be,
Happy old man, who from our lips dost suck
Into thine ears true wisdom, so thou art
But wise to learn, and studious to retain
What thou hast learnt, patient to bear the blows.
And buffets of hard fortune, to persist
Doing or suffering, firmly to abide
Hunger and cold, not craving where to dine,
To drink, to sport and trifle time away,
But holding that for best, which best becomes
A man who means to carry all things through
Neatly, expertly, perfect at all points
With head, hands, tongue, to force his way to fortune.

¹ This speech, which, in the common editions, is given to Socrates, is very properly restored by Brunck to the chorus.

Streps. Be confident ; I give myself for one
Of a tough heart, watchful as care can make me,
A frugal, pinching fellow, that can sup
Upon a sprig of savory and to bed ;
I am your man for this, hard as an anvil.

Socr. 'Tis well, so you will ratify your faith
In these our deities—chaos and Clouds
And speech—to these and only these adhere.

Streps. If from this hour henceforth I ever waste
A single thought on any other gods,
Or give them sacrifice, libation, incense,
Nay, even common courtesy, renounce me.

Chor. Speak your wish boldly then, so shall you prosper
As you obey and worship us, and study
The wholesome art of thriving.

Streps. Gracious ladies,
I ask no mighty favor, simply this—
Let me but distance every tongue in Greece,
And run 'em out of sight a hundred lengths.

Chor. Is that all? there we are your friends to serve you:
We will endow thee with such powers of speech,
As henceforth not a demagogue in Athens
Shall spout such popular harangues as thou shalt.

Streps. A fig for powers of spouting! give me powers
Of nonsuited my creditors.

Chor. A trifle—
Granted as soon as ask'd; only be bold,
And show yourself obedient to your teachers.

Streps. With your help so I will, being undone,
Stript of my pelf by these high-blooded cattle,
And a fine dame, the torment of my life.

Now let them work their wicked will upon me ;¹
 They're welcome to my carcase ; let 'em claw it,
 Starve it with thirst and hunger, fry it, freeze it,
 Nay, flay the very skin off ; 'tis their own ;
 So that I may but fob my creditors,
 Let the world talk ; I care not though it call me
 A bold-fac'd, loud-tongu'd, over-bearing bully ;
 A shameless, vile, prevaricating cheat ;
 A tricking, quibbling, double-dealing knave ;
 A prating, pettyfogging limb o' th' law ;
 A sly old fox, a perjurer, a hang-dog,
 A raggamuffin made of shreds and patches,
 The leavings of a dunghill—Let 'em rail,
 Yea, marry, let 'em turn my guts to fiddle-strings,
 May my bread be my poison ! if I care.²

¹ Here some of the old editions make Socrates and the Chorus leave the stage, and throw the remainder of this speech into soliloquy.

² This torrent of terms, nearly, if not quite synonymous, forms one of the most curious passages in this very singular author, and is such a specimen of the versatility and variety of the language, as almost defies translation. They are anapæsts in the original, and have been ignorantly thrown into soliloquy, which is properly corrected in Brunck's edition, for which there is not only the authority of the best MSS. but internal evidence of the strongest sort. I have struggled with the difficulty to the best of my power, and if the learned reader will take the trouble to compare my effort with the original, I flatter myself he will not think I have been unfaithful or unfortunate in the attempt.

Chor. This fellow hath a prompt and daring spirit—
Come hither, Sir ; do you perceive and feel
What great and glorious fame you shall acquire
By this our schooling of you ?

Streps. What, I pray you !

Chor. What but to live the envy of mankind
Under our patronage ?

Streps. When shall I see
Those halcyon days ?

Chor. Then shall your doors be throng'd
With clients waiting for your coming forth,
All eager to consult you, pressing all
To catch a word from you, with abstracts, briefs,
And cases ready-drawn for your opinion.
But come, begin and lecture this old fellow ;
Sift him, that we may see what meal he's made of.

Socr. Hark'ye, let's hear what principles you hold,
That these being known, I may apply such tools
As tally with your stuff.

Streps. Tools ! by the gods ;
Are you about to spring a mine upon me ?

Socr. Not so, but simply in the way of practice
To try your memory.

Streps. Oh ! as for that,
My memory is of two sorts, long and short :
With them, who owe me aught, it never fails ;
My creditors indeed complain of it,
As mainly apt to leak and lose its reck'ning.

Socr. But let us hear if nature hath endow'd you
With any grace of speaking.

Streps. None of speaking,

But a most apt propensity to cheating.

Socr. If this be all, how can you hope to learn?

Streps. Fear me not, never break your head for that.

Socr. Well then, be quick, and when I speak of things
Mysterious and profound, see that you make,
No boggling, but—

Streps. I understand your meaning ;
You'd have me bolt philosophy by mouthfuls,
Just like a hungry cur.¹

Socr. Oh! brutal, gross,
And barbarous ignorance! I must suspect,
Old as thou art, thou must be taught with stripes :
Tell me now, when thou art beaten, what dost feel?

Streps. The blows of him that beats me I do feel ;
But having breath'd awhile I lay my action
And cite my witnesses ; anon more cool,
I bring my cause into the court, and sue
For damages.

Socr. Strip off your cloak! prepare.

Streps. Prepare for what? what crime have I committed?

Socr. None ; but the rule and custom is with us,
That all shall enter naked.

Streps. And why naked?
I come with no search-warrant ; fear me not ;
I'll carry naught away with me.

Socr. No matter ;
Conform yourself, and strip.²

¹ He glances at the Cynic philosophers.

² The humor of this, and every other dialogue between

Streps. And if I do,
Tell me for my encouragement to which
Of all your scholars will you liken me.

Socr. You shall be call'd a second Chærephon.

Streps. Ah ! Chærephon is but another name
For a dead corpse—excuse me.

Socr. No more words:
Pluck up your courage ; answer not, but follow :
Haste and be perfected.

Streps. Give me my dole ¹
Of honey-cake in hand, and pass me on ;

these characters, consists in the clown's continual misconstruction of the philosopher's meaning. The poet, who seems to hold all the superstitious ceremonies of the heathen religion in contempt, makes Socrates insist upon Strepsiades stripping himself naked before he can be admitted of his school, because such was the practice with those, who were initiated into the *sacred mysteries*. The clown, who does not see the drift of this injunction, excuses himself from obeying it, by saying, he does not come like those, who are sent upon the search for stolen goods, and who by law were obliged to enter all such houses naked, and so to go out of them, that their warrant might not be made a pretence for plundering the owners.

¹ Strepsiades, though seemingly unconscious of the allusions to the sacred mysteries, is perfectly well versed in the ceremonials of Trophonius's cave, and asks for the honey-cake, which is an indispensable oblation to the prophetic dragon under ground. The circumstance of stripping naked applies equally to the candidate for admission to the cave, as well as to the mysteries, properly so called.

Ne'er trust me if I do not quake and tremble
As if the cavern of Trophonius yawn'd,
And I were stepping in.

Socr. What ails you? enter!

Why do you halt and loiter at the door?

(Exeunt Socrates and Strepsiades.)

Chor. Go, brave adventurer, proceed!

May fortune crown the gallant deed;
Tho' far advanc'd in life's last stage,
Spurning the infirmities of age,
Thou canst to youthful labors rise,
And boldly struggle to be wise.

Ye, who are here spectators of our scene,^a
Give me your patience to a few plain words,

^a This address, it is presumed, was spoken by the Chorus on the part of the author, and probably by one wearing his mask. I think it is easy to understand his motives for the introduction of it here, whilst the action of the comedy is suspended, and in this stage of its progress rather than as a prologue before the opening of the play, when the minds of the audience might have been less favorably disposed to receive it. Depending upon the interest, which the preceding scenes would naturally create, he now ventures gently to expostulate with them upon the hard treatment his former comedy of the Clouds had met with, vindicating that performance, yet artfully charging its miscarriage upon a cabal, whose ignorance and injustice they had no share in. This is curious, as far as it gives us an insight into the mind and feelings of the poet, where we can at once discover a high sense and understanding of his own merit, and a keen resentment of the indignity he had suffered by what he calls a faction, from which

And by my patron Bacchus, whose I am,
I swear they shall be true ones—Gentle friends,
So may I prosper in your fair esteem,
As I declare in truth that I was mov'd
To tender you my former comedy,
As deeming it the best of all my works,
And you it's judges worthy of that work,
Which I had wrought with my best care and pains :
But fools were found to thrust me from the stage,
And you, whose better wisdom should have sav'd me
From that most vile cabal, permitted it ;
For which I needs must chide, yet not so sharply
As to break off from such approv'd good friends :
No, you have been my patrons from all time,
Ev'n to my first-born issue : when I dropt
My bantling at your door to hide the shame
Of one, who call'd herself a maiden muse,
You charitably took the foundling in,
And gave it worthy training. Now, behold,
This sister comedy, Electra-like,
Comes on the search if she perchance may find
Some recognition of her brother lost,
Tho' but a relic of his well-known hair.

however he exculpates his present audience, only because he fears to provoke them to a similar opposition, and finds it necessary to sooth them into good-humor, fully evincing by the compliments he pays them, how doubtfully he thought of his own situation, and of their disposition to support him in his present undertaking.

Seemly and modest she appears before you ;
 Not like our stage buffoons in shaggy hide
 To set the mob a roaring ; she will vent
 No foolish jests at baldness, ' will not dance
 The sottish cordax ; ² we have no old man
 Arm'd with a staff to practise manual jokes
 On the by-standers' ribs, and keep the ring
 For them who dance the chorus : you shall see
 No howling furies ³ burst upon the stage
 Waving their fiery torches ; other weapons
 Than the muse gives us we shall not employ,
 Nor let ah me, ah me ! ⁴ sigh in your ears.
 Yet not of this I boast, nor that I scorn
 To cater for your palates out of scraps
 At second or third hand, but fresh and fair
 And still original, as one, who knows

¹ This is a retort upon Eupolis, who had taken occasion to ridicule Aristophanes for so poor a reason as his being bald-headed. I need not remind the reader that the *Electra-like* points at Æschylus.

² The cordax was a comic dance of a gross and indecent character, in which the performers counterfeited drunkenness. It became proverbial, and is alluded to by a variety of authors ; see *Meursius in Orchestra*.

³ Æschylus was mulct in a heavy fine for introducing his chorus of furies armed with fiery torches.

⁴ He says (glancing at the hypochondriac philosophers) that he will not weary his audience with the mournful repetitions of 'οὐδ', 'οὐδ' ! Yet with these very words Strepsiadēs opens the very play we are upon.

When he has done a good deed where to stop,
 And having levell'd Cleo¹ to the ground,
 Not to insult his carcase, like to those
 Who having once run down Hyperbolus,
 Poor devil ! mouth and mangle without mercy
 Him and his mother too ; foremost of these
 Was Eupolis, who pilfer'd from my muse,
 And pass'd it for his own with a new name,
 Guilty the more for having dash'd his theft
 With the obscene device of an old hag
 Dancing the drunken cordax in her cups,
 Like her Phrynichus feign'd to be devour'd
 By the sea-monster—Shame upon such scenes !
 Hermippus next *Hyperboliz'd* amain,
 And now the whole pack open in full cry,
 Holding the game in chace, which I had rous'd.
 If there be any here, who laugh with these,²
 Let such not smile with me ; but if this night

¹ Cleo's death took place in the year following.

² It is curious, though not pleasing, to observe with what acrimony these contemporary wits pursue each other, and it is not unnatural to conclude, that wherever the practice shall obtain, as at Athens, of reviewing the dramatic productions of the year, and adjudging the prize of fame to one above all the rest, the consequences must ever be such, or nearly such, as we now contemplate. Those adjudications, we have authority to believe, were in many cases partial, or at least injudicious, and even at best they could not but be attended with murmurs and remonstrances, nor fail to aggravate the animosity and inflame the envious spirits of rival authors, high in their own conceit, and keenly jealous of each other's success.

Ye crown these scenes with merited applause,
 Posterity shall justify your taste.

Semichorus. Great Jove, supreme of Gods, and heav'n's
 high king,

First I invoke ; next him the trident's lord,¹
 Whose mighty stroke smites the wild waves asunder,
 And makes the firm earth tremble ; thee, from whom
 We draw our being, all-inspiring Air,
 Parent of nature ; and thee, radiant Sun,
 Thron'd in thy flaming chariot, I invoke,
 Dear to the gods and by the world ador'd.

Chorus of Clouds. Most grave and sapient judges,
 hear the charge,

Which we shall now prefer, of slights ill brook'd
 By us your wrong'd appellants : for whilst we,
 The patronesses of your state, the Clouds,
 Of all the powers celestial serve you most,
 You graceless mortals serve us not at all ;
 Nor smoke, nor sacrifice ascends from you,
 But blank ingratitude and cold neglect.
 If some rash enterprise you set on foot,
 Some brainless project, straight with rain or thunder,
 Sure warnings, we apprize you of your folly :
 When late you made that offspring of a tanner,
 That Paphlagonian odious to the gods,
 The general of your armies, mark how fierce
 We scowl'd upon you, and indignant roll'd

¹ He follows the Homeric order in addressing Neptune next to Jupiter ; and in his attributes seems to have the Prometheus of Æschylus in his eye.

Our thunders intermixt with flashing fires ;
The Moon forsook her course, and the vext Sun
Quench'd his bright torch, disdaining to behold
Cleo your chief, yet chief that Cleo was,
For it should seem a proverb with your people,
That measures badly taken best succeed :
But if you'll learn of us the ready mode
To cancel your past errors, and ensure
Fame and good-fortune for the public weal,
You have nought else to do, but stop the swallow ¹
Of that wide-gaping cormorant, that thief
Convicted and avow'd, with a neat noose
Drawn tight and fitted to his scurvy throat.

Semichorus. Thou too, Apollo, of thy native isle,
Upon the Cinthian mount high thron'd, the king,
Hear and be present ! thou, Ephesian goddess,
Whose golden shrine the Lydian damsels serve
With rich and costly worship ; thou, Minerva,
Arm'd with the dreadful ægis, virgin queen,
And patroness of Athens ; thou, who hold'st
Divided empire on Parnassus' heights,
Lead hither thy gay train of revellers,

¹ In this period of the Greek comedy, these appeals to the theatre had a kind of Saturnalian privilege for personalities of the coarsest sort. It does not appear that Cleo's public character deserved these invectives, though his private one was far from amiable. The account of his public services will be found in Thucydides, lib. iv. and he died in battle ; but Aristophanes bore him an inveterate grudge for opposing him in the matter of his naturalization.

Convivial god, and thus invok'd approach !

Chorus. As we were hither journeying, in midway
We crost upon the Moon, who for a while
Held us in converse, and with courteous greeting
To this assembly charg'd us—This premis'd,
The tenor of our next instruction points
To anger and complaint for ill returns
On your part to good offices on her's.
First, for the loan of her bright silver lamp
So long held out to you, by which you've sav'd
Your torch and lacquey for this many a night.
More she could name, if benefits avail'd ;
But you have lost all reck'ning of your feasts,
And turn'd your calendar quite topsey-turvey ;
So that the deities, who find themselves
Bilk'd of their dues, and supperless for lack
Of their accustom'd sacrifices, rail
At her, poor Moon, and vent their hungry spite,
As she were in the fault ; whilst you, forsooth,
Maliciously select our gala days,
When feasting would be welcome, for your suits
And criminal indictments ; but when we *

* When the poet, who is here speaking in his own person, indulges himself in such a vein of daring ridicule, it would be hard to suppose that he was seriously employed to fix the charge of impiety upon Socrates, for the purpose of bringing him to trial. That he was guiltless of this cruel intention, stronger internal evidence cannot be adduced than what this Chorus affords ; and there must be a wondrous want of reverence for the gods amongst the people at large, or an unbounded

Keep fast and put on mourning for the loss
 Of Memnon or Sarpedon, sons of Heaven,
 Then, then you mock us with the savory odor
 Of smoking dainties, which we may not taste :
 Therefore it is, that when this year ye sent
 Your deputy Amphictyon to the diet,
 (Hyperbolus forsooth) in just revenge
 We tore away his crown, and drove him back
 To warn you how you slight the Moon again.

Socrates, Strepsiades, Chorus.

Socr. O vivifying breath, ethereal air, ¹
 And thou profoundest chaos, witness for me
 If ever wretch was seen so gross and dull,
 So stupid and perplexed as this old clown,
 Whose shallow intellect can entertain

privilege of lampooning them on the stage, when such passages as this could pass with impunity. As for the seemingly serious invocations of the Semichorns, them I regard as mere parodies upon the tragic poets, who carried them to excess; and it was only because Socrates was known to hold the licentiousness of the comic poets in contempt, that they were provoked to retort that contempt upon him and his doctrines.

¹ This is one of the passages where Aristophanes is charged with having paved the way for Anytus and Melitus in their attack upon Socrates; but referring to what we have repeatedly offered upon this subject, we leave it with the reader. The circumstance of the vermin, which annoy Strepsiades in his pallet, is ridicule of no very cleanly species, yet the affected poverty of habit, which many of the sophists put on, and their loathsome neglect of their persons, merited contempt and reproof.

No image nor impression of a thought ;
But ere you've told it, it is lost and gone.
'Tis time however he should now come forth
In the broad day—What hoa ! Strepsiades—
Take up your pallet ; bring yourself and it
Into the light.

Streps. Yes, if the bugs would let me.

Socr. Quick, quick, I say ; set down your load and
listen !

Streps. Lo ! here am I.

Socr. Come, tell me what it is
That you would learn besides what I have taught you ;
Is it of measure, verse, or modulation ?

Streps. Of measure by all means, for I was fobb'd
Of two days' dole i' th' measure of my meal
By a damn'd knavish huckster.

Socr. Pish ! who talks
Of meal ? I ask which metre you prefer,
Tetrametre or trimetre.

Streps. I answer—
Give me a pint pot.¹

¹ There was a certain measure, as near as possible to our pint, which the Greeks dealt out daily of meal to their slaves. To this Strepsiades alludes when he says he was defrauded of two measures, and to this humorous mal-entendu he obstinately adheres through the whole scene, playing upon the pedantry of the philosopher by contrasting it with the rusticity of the clown, which, though difficult to translate into modern language, is surely a scene in the best style of the author.

Socr. Yes, but that's no answer.

Streps. No answer! stake your money, and I'll wager
That your tetrametre is half my pint pot.

Socr. Go to the gallows, clodpate, with your pint pot!
Will nothing stick to you? But come, perhaps
We may try further and fare better with you—
Suppose I spoke to you of modulation;
Will you be taught of that?

Streps. Tell me first,
Will I be profited? will I be paid
The meal that I was chous'd of? tell me that.

Socr. You will be profited by being taught
To bear your part at table in some sort
After a decent fashion; you will learn
Which verse is most commensurate and fit
To the arm'd chorus in the dance of war,
And which with most harmonious cadence guides
The dactyl in his course poetical.

Streps. The dactyl, quotha! Sure I know that well.

Socr. As how? discuss.

Streps. Here, at my fingers' end;
This is my dactyl, and has been my dactyl
Since I could count my fingers.

Socr. Oh! the dolt.

Streps. I wish to be no wiser in these matters.¹

¹ This is an excellent answer on the part of common sense to all such unprofitable and pedantic trifling. It is not easy to conceive how the wit of man could devise means of exhibiting the character of a sophist in a more ludicrous light, than is done throughout the whole of this very extraordinary drama.

Socr. What then?

Streps. Why then, teach me no other art
But the fine art of cozening.

Socr. Granted; still

There is some previous matter, as for instance
The genders male and female¹—Can you name them?

Streps. I were a fool else—These are masculine;
Ram, bull, goat, dog, and pullet.

Socr. There you're out:

Pullet is male and female.

Streps. Tell me how?

Socr. Cock and hen pullet—So they should be nam'd.

Streps. And so they should, by the ethereal air!
You've hit it; for which rare discovery,
Take all the meal this cardopus contains.

Socr. Why there again you sin against the genders,
To call your bolting-tub a cardopus,
Making that masculine which should be fem'nine.

Streps. How do I make my bolting-tub a male?

Socr. Did you not call it cardopus? As well
You might have call'd Cleonymus a man;

¹ If this same art of cozening was little else but that of quibbling upon words, the philosopher is not without reason made to lecture his pupil upon the genders of nouns; and as the meanest evasion language will admit of is that species of quibbling to which this lecture leads, severer ridicule could not be employed against the person it affects; whether it was well or ill founded we do not say, but, be that as it may, take it as a specimen of comic contrast, and perhaps no two characters were ever presented on the stage more humorously or more ingeniously opposed.

He and your bolting-tub alike belong
To t'other sex, believe me.

Streps. Well, my trough
Shall be a Cardopa and he Cleonyma;
Will that content you?

Socr. Yes, and while you live
Learn to distinguish sex in proper names.

Streps. I do; the female I am perfect in.

Socr. Give me the proof.

Streps. Lysilla, she's a female;
Philinna, and Demetria, and Clitagora.

Socr. Now name your males.

Streps. A thousand—as for instance,
Philoxenus, Melesias, and Amynias.

Socr. Call you these masculine, egregious dunce?

Streps. Are they not such with you?

Socr. No; put the case,
You and Amynias meet—how will you greet him?

Streps. Why, thus for instance—Hip! holla! Aminia!

Socr. There, there! you make a wench of him at once.

Streps. And fit it is for one who shuns the field;¹
A coward ought not to be call'd a man;
Why teach me what is known to all the world?

Socr. Aye, why indeed?—but come, repose yourself.

Streps. Why so?

Socr. For meditation's sake: lie down.

¹ This Amynias seems to have had his full share of abuse from the comic poets of his time: Eupolis, Crates, and our author, in various parts, bestow it very plentifully.

Streps. Not on this lousy pallet I beseech you ;
But if I must lie down, let me repose
On the bare earth and meditate.

Socr. Away !

There's nothing but this bed will cherish thought.

Streps. It cherishes, alas ! a host of bugs,
That show no mercy on me.

Socr. Come, begin,
Cudgel your brains and turn yourself about ;
Now ruminate awhile, and if you start
A thought that puzzles you, try t'other side
And turn to something else, but not to sleep ;
Suffer not sleep to close your eyes one moment.

Streps. Ah ! woe is me ; ah, woeful, well-a-day !

Socr. What ails you ? why this moaning ?

Streps. I am lost ;
I've rous'd the natives from their hiding holes ;
A colony of bugs in ambuscade
Have fall'n upon me ; belly, back, and ribs,
No part is free : I feed a commonwealth.

Socr. Take not your sufferings too much to heart.

Streps. How can I chuse—a wretch made up of wants !
Here am I penniless and spiritless,
Without a skin, Heav'n knows, without a shoe ;
And to complete my miseries here I lie
Like a starv'd centinel upon his post
At watch and ward, till I am shrunk to nothing.

Socr. How now ; how fare you ? Have you sprung a
thought ?

Streps. Yes, yes, so help me Neptune !

Socr. Hah ! what is it ?

Streps. Why I am thinking if these cursed vermin
Will leave one fragment of my carcase free.

Socr. A plague confound you !

Streps. Spare yourself that prayer ;

I'm plagu'd already to your heart's content.

Socr. Prythee don't be so tender of your skin ;

Tuck yourself up and buff it like a man :

Keep your scull under cover, and depend on't

'Twill make your brain bring forth some precious project

For farthering your good-fortune at the expence

Of little else but honesty and justice.

Streps. Ah ! would to Heav'n some friendly soul would
help me

To a fine project how to cheat the bugs

With a sleek lambskin.

Socr. Whereabouts, I trow,

Sits the wind now ? What ails you ? are you dozing ?

Streps. Not I, by Heaven !

Socr. Can you start nothing yet ?

Streps. Nothing, so help me.

Socr. Will your head breed no project,

Tho' nurs'd so daintily ?

Streps. What should it breed ?

Tell me, sweet Socrates ; give me some hint.

Socr. Say first what 'tis you wish.

Streps. A thousand times,

Ten thousand times I've said it o'er and o'er—

My creditors, my creditors—'Tis them

I would fain bilk.

Socr. Go to ! get under cover,

Keep your head warm, and rarify your wits

Till they shall sprout into some fine conceit,
Some scheme of happy promise : sift it well,
Divide, abstract, compound, and when 'tis ready,
Out with it boldly.

Streps. Miserable me!
Would I were out !

Socr. Lie still,¹ and if you strike
Upon a thought that baffles you, break off
From that intanglement and try another,
So shall your wits be fresh to start again.

Streps. Hah ! my dear boy !—My precious Socrates !

Socr. What would'st thou, gaffer ?

Streps. I have sprung a thought,
A plot upon my creditors.

Socr. Discuss !

Streps. Answer me this—Suppose that I should hire
A witch, who some fair night shall raise a spell,
Whereby I'll snap the moon from out her sphere
And bag her

Socr. What to do !

Streps. To hold her fast,
And never let her run her courses more ;
So shall I 'scape my creditors.

Socr. How so ?

¹ This incident of the truckle bed, and all Socrates's instructions for soliciting the inspiration of some sudden thought, are a banter upon the pretended visions and communications with dæmons of the sophists and philosophers ; tricks brought by them out of Egypt and the East, which served to impose upon the credulous and vulgar.

Streps. Because the calculations of their usury
Are made from month to month.

Socr. A gallant scheme ;
And yet methinks I could suggest a hint
As practicable and no less ingenious—
Suppose you are arrested for a debt,
We'll say five talents, how will you contrive
To cancel at a stroke both debt and writ ?

Streps. Gramercy ! I can't tell you how off hand ;
It needs some cogitation.

Socr. Were you apt,
Such cogitations would not be to seek ;
They would be present at your fingers' ends,
Buzzing alive, like chafers in a string,
Ready to slip and fly.

Streps. I've hit the nail
That does the deed, and so you will confess.

Socr. Out with it !

Streps. Good chance but you have noted
A pretty toy, a trinket in the shops,
Which being rightly held produceth fire
From things combustible—

Socr. A burning glass,
Vulgarly call'd—

Streps. You are right ; 'tis so.

Socr. Proceed !

Streps. Put the case now your whoreson bailiff comes,
Shows me his writ—I, standing thus, d'ye mark me,
In the sun's stream, measuring my distance, guide
My focus to a point upon his writ,
And off it goes in fume.

Socr. By the Graces !

'Tis wittingly devis'd.

Streps. The very thought

Of his five talents cancel'd at a stroke

Makes my heart dance for joy.

Socr. But now again—

Streps. What next ?

Socr. Suppose yourself at bar, surpriz'd

Into a suit, no witnesses at hand,

The judge prepar'd to pass decree against you—

How will you parry that ?

Streps. As quick as thought—

Socr. But how ?

Streps. Incontinently hang myself,

And baulk the suitor—

Socr. Come, you do but jest.

Streps. Serious, by all the gods ! A man that's dead

Is out of the law's reach.

Socr. I've done with you—

Instruction's lost upon you ; your vile jests

Put me beyond all patience.

Streps. Nay, but tell me

What is it, my good fellow, that offends thee ?

Socr. Your execrable lack of memory.

Why how now ; what was the first rule I taught you ?

Streps. Say'st thou the first ? the very first—what was it ?

Why, let me see ; 'twas something, was it not ?

About the meal—Out on it ! I have lost it.

Socr. Oh thou incorrigible, old doating blockhead,

Can hanging be too bad for thee !

Streps. Why there now !

Was ever man so us'd ? If I can't make
My tongue keep pace with your's, teach it the quirks
And quibbles of your sophistry at once,
I may go hang—I am a fool forsooth—
Where shall I turn. Oh gracious Clouds, befriend me,¹
Give me some counsel.

Chorus. This it is, old man—
If that your son at home is apt and docile,
Depute him in your stead, and send him hitler.

Streps. My son is well endow'd with nature's gifts,
But obstinately bent against instruction.

Chorus. And do you suffer it ?

Streps. What can I do ?

He's a fine full-grown youth, a dashing fellow,
And by the mother's side of noble blood :
I'll feel my way with him—but if he kicks,
Befall what may, nothing shall hinder me
But I will kick him headlong out of doors,
And let him graze ev'n where he will for me—
Wait only my return ; I'll soon dispatch. [Exit.

¹ This apostrophe to the Chorus, for which the old man is prepared by the reproaches of Socrates, is very artfully introduced. It not only gives them a timely interest in the scene, and breaks the long silence they had kept, but produces a new incident in the drama, on which the catastrophe is made to turn. It is also perfectly fit, that the thought of sending the son to Socrates in place of the father should be suggested by the Chorus, and not spring from either of the persons present on the scene.

Chor. " Highly favor'd shalt thou be,
 " With gifts and graces kept in store
 " For those who our divinities adore,
 " And to no other altars bend the knee :
 " And well we know th' obedience shown
 " By this old clown deriv'd alone
 " From lessons taught by thee.
 " Wherefore to swell thy lawful gains,
 " Thou soon shalt skin this silly cur,
 " Whom thou hast put in such a stir,
 " And take his plunder for thy pains :
 " For mark how often dupes like him devise
 " Projects that only serve t' enrich the wise."¹

Strepsiades, Phidippides.

Streps. Out of my house ! I call the Clouds to witness
 You shall not set a foot within my doors.
 Go to your Lord Megacles ! Get you hence,
 And gnaw his posts for hunger.

Phidip. Ah, poor man !

¹ Such of the editions, as have arranged this comedy into acts, make the second to conclude in this place. The ridiculous lucubrations of Strepsiades in the philosopher's truckle-bed, with his scheme of the witch and the burning glass, which form the humor of the foregoing scene, had doubtless some temporary points of personality, which we are now at a loss to trace, further than in the project for arresting the moon, where he seems to glance at Pythagoras. The *Clouds*, in this comedy, are not merely those insipid, episodical personages, which only seem to interrupt and encumber the drama, but take an important part in the business of the scene, and put in motion the chief incidents of the plot.

I see how it is with you. You are mad,
Stark mad, by Jupiter!

Streps. You swear by Jupiter!

Why then I swear by Jove there's no such god—
Now who is mad but you?

Phidip. Why do you turn
Such solemn truths to ridicule!

Streps. I laugh
To hear a child prate of such old men's fables;
But list to what I'll tell you, learn of me,
And from a child you shall become a man—
But keep the secret close, do you mark me, close;
Beware of babbling—

Phidip. Heyday! what is coming?

Streps. You swore but now by Jupiter—

Phidip. I did.

Streps. Mark now what 'tis to have a friend like me—
I tell you at a word there is no Jupiter.

Phidip. How then?

Streps. He's off: I tell it you for truth;
He's out of place, and Vortex reigns instead.

Phidip. Vortex indeed! What freak has caught you
now?

Streps. No freak, 'tis fact.

Phidip. Who tells you this?

Streps. Who tells me?

Who but that Melian atheist Socrates, ¹

¹ He calls Socrates a Melian, insinuating that he is, like
Diagoras of Melos, a professed despiser of the heathen Deities.
When this very comedy furnishes so many passages in direct

And Chærephon, the flea philosopher?

Phidip. Are you so far gone in your dotage, sir,
As to be dup'd by the profane opinions
Of rancorous pedagogues?

Streps. Keep a good tongue;
Take heed you slander not such worthy men,
So wise withal and learned, men so pure
And cleanly in their morals, that no razor
Ever profan'd their beards; their unwash'd hides
Ne'er dabbled in a bath, nor wafted scent
Of od'rous ungent as they pass'd along.
But you, a prodigal fine spark, make waste
And havoc of my means, as I were dead
And out of thought—but come, turn in and learn.

Phidip. What can I learn or profit from such teachers?

Streps. Thou canst learn every thing that turns to
profit;

But first and foremost thou canst learn to know
Thyself how totally unlearn'd thou art,
How mere a blockhead and how dull of brain—
But wait awhile with patience— [Exit.

Phidip. Woe is me!

How shall I deal with this old crazy father?
What course pursue with one, whose reason wanders
Out of all course? Shall I take out the statute
And cite him for a lunatic, or wait

contempt of those Deities, the poet cannot be supposed to affix
any great degree of criminality to his charge against him.
The audience, that could endure the poet, might well excuse
the philosopher.

Till nature and his phrenzy with the help
Of the undertaker shall provide a cure ?

(*Strepsiades returns.*)

Streps. Now we shall see ! Lo ! what have I got here ?

Phidip. A chicken—

Streps. Well, and this ?

Phidip. A chicken also.

Streps. Are they the same then ? Have a care, good
boy,

How you expose yourself, and for the future
Describe them cock and hen-chick severally.

Phidip. Ridiculous ! Is this the grand discovery
You have just borrow'd from these sons o' th' dunghill ?

Streps. This, and a thousand others—but being old
And lax of memory I lose it all
As fast as it comes in.

Phidip. Yes, and methinks
By the same token you have lost your cloak.

Streps. No, I've not lost it ; I have laid it out
Upon the arts and sciences.

Phidip. Your shoes—
They're vanish'd too. How have you laid them out ?

Streps. Upon the commonwealth—Like Pericles¹
I'm a barefooted patriot—Now no more ;
Do as thou wilt, so thou wilt but conform
And humor me this once, as in times past
I humor'd thee, and in thy playful age
Brought thee a penny go-cart from the fair,

¹ He alludes to the sums that Pericles had expended in
bribing the Lacedæmonian ephori, Cleander and Plistianax.

Purchas'd with what I had earn'd at the assize,
The fee with my subpœna.

Phidip. You'll repent,
My life upon't; you will repent of this.

Streps. No matter, so you'll humor me—What ho!
Why Socrates, I say, come forth, behold
Here is my son; I've brought him, tho' in faith
Sorely against the grain.

(Socrates enters.)

Socr. Aye, he's a novice,
And knows not where the panniers hang as yet.

Phidip. I would you'd hang yourself there in their
stead!

Streps. Oh monstrous impudence! this to your master!

Socr. Mark how the idiot quibbles upon *hanging*,
Driv'ling and making mouths—Can he be taught
The loopholes of the law; whence to escape,
How to evade and when to press a suit,
Or tune his lips to that soft rhetoric,
Which steals upon the ear, and melts to pity
The heart of the stern judge?

Streps. Come, never doubt him;
He is a lad of parts, and from a child
Took wondrously to dabbling in the mud,
Whereof he'd build you up a house so natural
As would amaze you, trace you out a ship,
Make you a little cart out of the sole
Of an old shoe mayhap, and from the rind
Of a pomegranate cut you out a frog,
You'd swear it was alive. Now what do you think?
Hath he not wit enough to comprehend

Each rule both right and wrong? Or if not both,
The latter way at least—There he'll be perfect.¹

Socr. Let him prepare: His lecturers are ready.

Streps. I will retire—When next we meet, remember
I look to find him able to contend

'Gainst right and reason, and outwit them both. [*Exit.*

(*Dicaeus*² and *Adicus* enter.³)

Dicaeus. Come forth; turn out, thou bold audacious
man,

¹ The account here given by the old man of his son's early talents is perfectly in character, and extremely pleasant. It also prepares the audience for the introduction of the allegorical characters of the just and unjust man, that are about to enter on the scene.

² It is generally supposed, that after the departure of Strepsiades, and before the just and unjust personages enter on the stage, the Chorus had a preparatory address in the original copy, which is now irretrievably lost.

³ The interlude, which now ensues between these allegorical personages, contending for the possession of their pupil Phidippides, after the manner of the Choice of Hercules, forms a very curious passage in this celebrated comedy. It is in some parts very highly elevated, in others very pointedly severe. The object of the poet is to bring before his audience the question between past and present education into full and fair discussion, comparing the principles of the schools then existing with the pure and moral discipline of former times, and though the advocate for sophistry is allowed to triumph over the patron of reason in the event of this mock trial, yet the poet has contrived to elicit a juster verdict from the Chorus, than he is willing to credit the spectators for: and

And face this company.

Adicus. Most willingly :

I do desire no better : take your ground

Before this audience, I am sure to triumph.

Dicæus. And who are you that vapor in this fashion ?

Adicus. Fashion itself—the very style of the times.

Dicæus. Aye, of the modern times, and them and you
I set at naught.

Adicus. I shall bring down your pride.

Dicæus. By what most witty weapon ?

Adicus. By the gift
Of a most apt invention.

Dicæus. Then I see
You have your fools to back you.

Adicus. No, the wise
Are those I deal with.

Dicæus. I shall spoil your market.

Adicus. As how, good sooth ?

Dicæus. By speaking such plain truths
As may appeal to justice.

Adicus. What is justice ?

we must acknowledge it is not without cause that he is thus severe in his reproaches for their partiality to the reigning system, when we recollect that the magistracy of Athens had taken so strong a part with the philosophers against the stage, by silencing the comic writers to gratify the spleen of the Academies. To his own breast therefore, and to the breasts of the Chorus only, he appeals for justice, and obtains it ; the rest he consigns to depravity of judgment and corruption of principle.

There's no such thing—I traverse your appeal.

Dicaeus. How! No such thing as justice?

Adicus. No; where is it?

Dicaeus. With the immortal gods.

Adicus. If it be there,

How chanc'd it Jupiter himself escap'd¹

For his unnatural deeds to his own father?

Dicaeus. For shame, irreverent wretch, thus do you talk?

I sicken at impiety so gross,

My stomach kicks against it.

Adicus. You are craz'd;

Your wits, old gentleman, are off the hinges.

Dicaeus. You are a vile blasphemer and buffoon.

Adicus. Go on! you pelt me—but it is with roses.

Dicaeus. A scoffer!

Adicus. Every word your malice vents

Weaves a fresh wreath of triumph for my brows.

¹ These are strong words, and if the learned reader refers to the original, throughout the whole of these short speakings, I flatter myself he will credit me for as close an adherence to my author, as our respective languages will admit of. To the whole of this curious altercation I have given my best attention, as I doubt not but the poet himself did when he conceived it. A bolder sally of heathen blasphemy than this is no where upon classic record, and though he checks the speaker with a strong reproof, yet the risk of uttering it on the stage at all events, and the good reasons we have to presume the audience passed it off with impunity, is at least a proof that the friends of Jupiter were not very zealous to revenge his affronts.

Dicæus. A parricide!

Adicus. Proceed, and spare me not—
You shower down gold upon me.

Dicæus. Lead, not gold,
Had been your retribution in times past.

Adicus. Aye, but times present cover me with glory.

Dicæus. You are too wicked.

Adicus. You are much too weak.

Dicæus. Thank your own self, if our Athenian fathers
Coop up their sons at home, and fear to trust them
Within your schools, conscious that nothing else
But vice and folly can be learnt of you.

Adicus. Methinks, friend, your's is but a ragged trade.

Dicæus. And your's, oh shame! a thriving one, tho'
late,

A perfect Telephus, ' you tramp'd the street

' This is not the only passage in Aristophanes, nor is he the only comic poet who satirises Euripides for his character of Telephus, charging him with having exhibited a spectacle too beggarly and disgusting to be suffered on the tragic stage. How the delicacy of an Athenian audience might resent that spectacle, is no question of criticism at the present moment; certain it is, that the language of Telephus has not degraded the stage, but has graces that might have atoned for the indecorum of his exterior, if in fact there was any. What the poet adds with respect to the contents of his beggar's wallet, which in place of crusts and fragments of food he furnishes with what he calls *Pandeletian* scraps or sentences, this is figuratively said in allusion to his malignity, *Pandelletus* being notorious to a proverb for his malignant and litigious character, and accordingly held up to ridicule by the

With beggar's wallet cram'm'd with hungry scraps
Of Pandeletus—pettifogging fare.

Adicus. Oh! what rare wisdom you remind me of!

Dicæus. Oh, what rank folly their's, who rule this city,
And let it nourish such a pest as you,
To sap the morals of the rising age.

Adicus. You'll not inspire your pupil with these notions,
Old hoary-headed time!

Dicæus. I will inspire him,
If he has grace, to shun the malady
Of your eternal clack.

Adicus. Turn to me, youth!
And let him rail at leisure.

Dicæus. Keep your distance,
And lay your hands upon him at your peril.

Chor. Come, no more wrangling.—Let us hear you
both;

You of the former time produce your rules
Of ancient discipline—of modern, you—
That so, both weigh'd, the candidate may judge
Who offers fairest, and make choice between you.

Dicæus. I close with the proposal.

Adicus. 'Tis agreed.

Chor. But which of you shall open?

Adicus. That shall he:

comic poets, particularly by Cratinus in his play of *The Centaurs*: the sense of this passage, therefore, which, in some copies is greatly corrupted, is, that he was as squalid as Telephus in his person, and as malicious as Pandeletus in his nature.

I yield him up that point, and in reply,
My words like arrows levelled at a but
Shall pierce him through and through ; then, if he rallies,
If he comes on again with a rejoinder,
I'll launch a swarm of syllogisms at him,
That, like a nest of hornets, shall belabor him,
Till they have left him not an eye to see with.

Chor. “ Now, sirs, exert your utmost care
“ And gravely for the charge prepare,
“ The well-rang'd hoard of thought explore,
“ Where sage experience keeps her store ;
“ All the resources of the mind
“ Employment in this cause will find,
“ And he, who gives the best display
“ Of argument, shall win the day :
“ Wisdom this hour at issue stands,
“ And gives her fate into your hands ;
“ Your's is a question that divides
“ And draws out friends on different sides ;
“ Therefore on you, who, with such zealous praise,
“ Applaud the discipline of former days,
“ On you I call ; now is your time to show
“ You merit no less praise than you bestow.”

Dicæus. Thus summon'd, I prepare myself to speak
Of manners primitive, and that good time,
Which I have seen, when discipline prevail'd,
And modesty was sanctioned by the laws.
No babbling then was suffer'd in our schools,
The scholar's test was silence. The whole group
In orderly procession sallied forth
Right onwards, without straggling, to attend

Their teacher in harmonies ; though the snow
 Fell on them thick as meal, the hardy brood
 Breasted the storm uncloak'd: their harps were strung
 Not to ignoble strains, for they were taught
 A loftier key, whether to chant the name
 Of Pallas, terrible amidst the blaze
 Of cities overthrown, or wide and far
 To spread, as custom was, the echoing peal.
 There let no low buffoon intrude his tricks,
 Let no capricious quavering on a note,
 No running of divisions high and low
 Break the pure stream of harmony, no Phrynis¹
 Practising wanton warblings out of place—
 Woe to his back that so was found offending !
 Hard stripes and heavy would reform his taste.
 Decent and chaste their postures in the school
 Of their gymnastic exercises ; none
 Expos'd an attitude that might provoke
 Irregular desire ; their lips ne'er mov'd
 In love-inspiring whispers, and their walks
 From eyes obscene were sacred and secure.
 Hot herbs, the old man's diet, were proscrib'd ;
 No radish, anice, parsley, deck'd their board ;
 No rioting, no revelling was there
 At feast or frolic, no unseemly touch
 Or signal, that inspires the hint impure.

¹ Phrynis of Mitylene, the scholar of Aristoclydes, is frequently alluded to by the comic poets for having introduced a new species of modulation in music, deviating from the simplicity of the ancient harmony. When Callias was archon, Phrynis bore away the prize for minstrelsy at the Panathenæa.

Adicus. Why these are maxims obsolete and stale;
Worm-eaten rules, coeval with the hymns
Of old Cecydas and Buphonian feasts.¹

Dicaeus. Yet so were train'd the heroes, that imbru'd
The field of Marathon with hostile blood;
This discipline it was that brac'd their nerves
And fitted them for conquest. You, forsooth,
At great Minerva's festival produce
Your martial dancers, not as they were wont,
But smother'd underneath a tawdry load
Of cumbrous armor, till I sweat to see them
Dangling their shields in such unseemly sort
As mars the sacred measure of the dance.
Be wise, therefore, young man, and turn to me,
Turn to the better guide, so shall you learn
To scorn the noisy forum, shun the bath,
And turn with blushes from the scene impure:
Then conscious innocence shall make you bold
To spurn the injurious, but to reverend age
Meek and submissive, rising from your seat
To pay the homage due, nor shall you ever
Or wring the parent's soul, or stain your own.
In purity of manners you shall live
A bright example; vain shall be the lures
Of the stage-wanton floating in the dance,
Vain all her arts to snare you in her arms,

¹ Cecydas, a dithyrambic poet of very early times: Cratinus mentions him in his *Panoptæ*. The Buphonian festival, so called from the sacrifice of the ox, was a very ancient establishment.

And strip you of your virtue and good name.

No petulant reply shall you oppose

To fatherly commands, nor taunting vent

Irreverent mockery on his hoary head,

Crying—" Behold Iapetus himself ! "

Poor thanks for all his fond parental care.

Adicus. Aye, my brave youth, do, follow these fine
rules,

And learn by them to be as mere a swine,

Driveler, and dolt, as any of the sons

Of poor Hippocrates ; ¹ I swear by Bacchus,

Folly and foul contempt shall be your doom.

Dicæus. Not so, but fair and fresh in youthful bloom

Amongst our young athletics you shall shine ;

Not in the forum loit'ring time away

In gossip prattle, like our gang of idlers,

Nor yet in some vexatious paltry suit

Wrangling and quibbling in our petty courts,

But in the solemn academic grove,

Crown'd with the modest reed, fit converse hold

With your collegiate equals ; there serene,

Calm as the scene around you, underneath

The fragrant foliage where the ilex spreads,

Where the deciduous poplar strews her leaves,

Where the tall elm-tree and wide-stretching plane

Sigh to the fanning breeze, you shall inhale

Sweet odors wafted in the breath of spring.

This is the regimen that will insure

¹ Telesippus, Demophon, and Pericles, were sons of Hippocrates, proverbial for their stupidity.

A healthful body and a vigorous mind,
 A countenance serene, expanded chest,
 Heroic stature and a temperate tongue;
 But take these modern masters, and behold
 These blessings all revers'd; a pallid cheek,
 Shrunk shoulders, chest contracted, sapless limbs,
 A tongue that never rests, and mind debas'd,
 By their vile sophistry perversely taught
 To call good evil, evil good, and be
 That thing, which nature spurns at, that disease,
 A mere Antimachus,¹ the sink of vice.

*Chor.*² " Oh sage instructor, how sublime

¹ Of this Antimachus I collect nothing more, than that he was generally marked with contempt for his effeminacy and profligacy.

² The poet having concluded his discussion of the ancient discipline, in a very eloquent harangue (though perhaps out of place according to the rules of comedy, and somewhat of the longest) and being conscious of having given all the argument to the advocate for times past, contrives, through the vehicle of the Chorus, to point out to the audience how their consciences ought, in moral justice, to decide. It is in this scene only, that his attack upon the sophists is of a grave and solemn cast, in every other instance he combats them with the weapons of ridicule, for which the character of Strepsiades is most ingeniously contrived, and though he makes the worse reasoner triumph over the better, and bear away his pupil from him, yet it is a triumph gained by such low and despicable quibbles, such palpable and bare-faced sophistry, that the success of the event is at once the severest satire he can vent upon the conqueror and his cause.

“ These maxims of the former time !
“ How sweet this unpolluted stream
“ Of eloquence, how pure the theme !
“ Thrice happy they, whose lot was cast
“ Amongst the generation past,
“ When virtuous morals were display’d
“ And these grave institutes obey’d.
“ Now you, that vaunt yourself so high,
“ Prepare ; we wait for your reply,
“ And recollect, or ere you start,
“ You take in hand no easy part ;
“ Well hath he spoke, and reasons good
“ By better only are withstood ;
“ Sharpen your wits then, or you’ll meet
“ Contempt as certain as defeat.”

Adicus. Doubt not I’m ready, full up to the throat
And well nigh chok’d with plethory of words,
Impatient to discharge them. I do know
The mighty masters of the modern school
Term me the lower logic, so distinguish’d
From the old practice of the upper time,
By him personified ; which name of honor
I gain’d as the projector of that method,
Which can confute and puzzle all the courts
Of law and justice—An invention worth
Thousands to them who practise it, whereas
It nonsuits all opponents.—Let that pass.
Now take a sample of it in the ease,
With which I’ll baffle this old vaunting pedant
With his warm baths, that he forsooth forbids.
Harkye, old man, discuss, if so it please you,

Your excellent good reason for this rule,
That interdicts warm bathing.

Dicaeus. Simply this—

I hold it a relaxer, rendering men
Effeminate and feeble.

Adicus. Hold awhile—

I have you on the hook. Answer me this—

Of all the heroes Jupiter has father'd,
Which is for strength, for courage, and a course
Of labors, most renown'd?

Dicaeus. I know none

Superior in those qualities to Hercules.

Adicus. And who e'er heard Herculean[†] baths were
cold?

Yet Hercules himself you own was strong.

Dicaeus. Aye, this is in the very style of the times;
'These are the dialectics now in fashion
With our young sophists, who frequent the baths
Whilst the palaestra starves.

Adicus. I grant you this;

It is the style of the times, by you condemn'd,
By me approv'd, and not without good cause;
For how but thus doth ancient Nestor talk?
Can Homer err? Were all his wise men fools?
They are my witnesses.—Now for this tongue,
This member out of use by his decree,
Not so by mine.—His scholar must be silent

[†] Tepid baths, according to fabulous legends, being the gift of Vulcan to Hercules, it became a fashion to term all such Herculean.

And chaste withal—damping prescriptions both—
For what good fortune ever did betide
The mute and modest? Instance me a case.

Dicæus. Many—Chaste Peleus ¹ so obtain'd his sword.

Adicus. His sword! and what did Peleus gain by that?
Battle and blows this modest Peleus gain'd,
Whilst mean Hyperbolus, whose wretched craft
Was lamp-making, by craft of viler sort
Garbel'd his thousands, solid coin, not swords.

Dicæus. But continence befriended Peleus so
As won the goddess Thetis to his bed.

Adicus. And drove her out of it—for he was cold,
Languid and listless: she was brisk and stirring,
And sought the sport elsewhere. Now are you answer'd?
Good sooth you're in your dotage. Mark, young sir,
These are the fruits of continence: you see
What pleasure you must forfeit to preserve it—
All the delights that woman can bestow;
No am'rous sports to catch the fair one's smile,
No luscious dainties shall you then partake,
No gay convivial revels, where the glass
With peals of laughter circulates around;
These you must sacrifice, and without these

¹ Peleus, having withstood the solicitations of Atalante, wife of Acastus, was rewarded for his continence by the gods, with a sword of celestial temper, the workmanship of Vulcan. But Atalante, having accused him to her husband, and stimulated Acastus to revenge a supposed attempt upon her honor, Peleus found himself driven to declare war against him, and to this Adicus alludes in his retort upon Dicæus.

What is your life?—So much for your delights.—
 Now let us see how stands your score with nature—
 You're in some scrape we'll say—intrigue—adultery—
 You're caught, convicted, crush'd—for what can save you?
 You have no powers of speech—but arm'd by me
 You're up to all occasions : Nothing fear,
 Ev'n give your genius scope ; laugh, frolic, sport,
 And flout at shame ; for should the wittol spouse
 Detect you in the fact, you shall so pose him
 In his appeal, that nothing shall stick to you,
 For Jove shall take the blame from off your shoulders,
 Being himself a cuckold-making god,
 And you a poor frail mortal—Why should you
 Be wiser, stronger, purer than a god ?

Dicæus. But what if this your scholar should incur
 The catamite's correction, pill'd and sanded
 And garnish'd with a radish in his crupper,
 The scoff of all beholders—What fine quirk
 Will clear him at that pinch, but he must pass
 For a most perfect Ganimede ?

Adicus. What then ?
 Where is the harm ?

Dicæus. Can greater harm befall him ?

Adicus. What will you say if here I can confute you ?

Dicæus. Nothing—my silence shall confess your
 triumph.

Adicus. Come on then, answer me to what I ask.
 Our advocates—what are they ?

Dicæus. Catamites.

Adicus. Our tragic poets—what are they ?

Dicæus. The same.

Adicus. Good, very good!—our demagogues—

Dicaeus. No better.

Adicus. See there! discern you not that you are foil'd?
Cast your eyes round this company.—

Dicaeus. I do.

Adicus. And what do you discover?

Dicaeus. Numerous birds
Of the same filthy feather, so Heaven help me!
This man I mark; and this, and this fine fop
With his coil'd locks.—To all these I can swear.

Adicus. What say you then?

Dicaeus. I say I am confuted—
Here, wagtails, catch my cloak—I'll be amongst you.¹

Socr. Now, friend, what say you? who shall school
your son?

Streps. School him and scourge him, take him to
yourself.

And mind you whet him to an edge on both sides,
This for slight skirmish, that for stronger work.

Socr. Doubt not, we'll finish him to your content
A perfect sophist.

Phidip. Perfect skin and bone—
That I can well believe.

¹ Here ends this famous episode, reversing the Choice of Hercules, and making the spectators parties in the criminality and injustice of the decision. This short speech has been given in some copies to Phidippides, but it properly belongs to Dicaeus, whose action of throwing off his cloak alludes to Socrates's ceremony of stripping his disciples before they were initiated into his school.

Socr. No more—Away!

Phidip. Trust me you've made a rod for your own back.

(Manet Chorus.)

Now to our candid judges we shall tell
What recompence they may expect from us,
If they indeed are studious to deserve it :
First, on your new-sown grounds in kindly showers,
Postponing other calls, we will descend.
The bearing branches of your vines shall sprout,
Nor scorch'd with summer heats nor chill'd with rain.
This to our friends who serve us, but to him,
Who dares to slight us, let that mortal hear,
And tremble at the vengeance which awaits him :
Nor wine nor oil shall that man's farm produce ;
For when his olive trees should yield their fruit,
And his ripe vineyard tempts the gath'rer's hand,
We'll batter him to ruin, lay him bare ;
And if we catch him with his roof until'd,
Heav'ns! how we'll drench him with a pelting storm
Of hail and rain incessant ; above all,
Let him beware upon the wedding night ;
When he brings home his own or kinsman's bride,
Let him look to't! Then we'll come down in torrents,
That he shall rather take his chance in Egypt,
Than stand the vengeful soaking we will give him.

(Strepsiades alone.)

Lo! here's the fifth day gone—the fourth—the third—
The second too—day of all days to me
Most hateful and accurs'd—the dreadful eve,
Ushering the new moon, that lets in the tide
Of happy creditors, all sworn against me,

To rack and ruin me beyond redemption.
 I like a courteous debtor, who would fain
 Soften their flinty bosoms, thus accost them—
 “ Ah my good sir, this payment comes upon me
 “ At a bad time, excuse me—That bill’s due,
 “ But you’ll extend the grace—This you will cancel,
 “ And totally acquit me.”—By no means ;
 All with one voice cry out, they will be paid,
 And I must be be-knav’d into the bargain,
 And threaten’d with a writ to mend the matter—
 Well, let it come!—They may ev’n do their worst ;
 I care not so my son hath learnt the trick
 Of this new rhetoric, as will appear
 When I have beat this door—Boy, boy! come forth!

(Socrates comes forth.)

Socr. Hail to Strepsiades!

Streps. Thrice hail to Socrates!

But first I pray you take this dole of meal
 In token of the reverence I bear you ;
 And now, so please you, tell me of my son,
 Your late novice. Comes he on apace?

Socr. He apprehends acutely.

Streps. Oh brave news!

Oh the transcendent excellence of fraud!

Socr. Yes, you may set your creditors at naught—

Streps. And their avouchers too?—

Socr. Had they a thousand.

Streps. Then I’ll sing out my song, and sing aloud,
 And it shall be—Woe, woe to all your gang,
 Ye money-jobbing caitiffs, usurers, sharks!
 Hence with your registers, your cents-per-cent ;

I fear you not; ye cannot hook me now.
 Oh! such a son have I in training for you,
 Arm'd with a two-edg'd tongue that cuts o' both sides,
 The stay, support and pillar of my house,
 The scourge of my tormentors, the redeemer
 Of a most wretched father—Call him forth,
 Call him, I say, and let my eyes feast on him—
 What hoa! My son, my boy—Your father calls;
 Come forth and show yourself.

(*Phidippides enters.*)

Socr. Behold him present!

Streps. My dear—my darling—

Socr. Lo! you have your darling.

Streps. Joy, joy, my son! all joy—for now you wear

A face of the right character and cast,

A wrangling, quibbling, contradicting face;

Now you have got it neatly on your tongue—

The very quirk o' th' time—"What's that you say?

"What is it?"—Shifting from yourself the wrong

To him that suffers it—an arch conceit

To make a transfer of iniquity,

When it has serv'd your turn—Yes, you will pass;

You've the right Attic stamp upon your forehead.

Now let me see a sample of your service,

Forsooth to say you owe me a good turn.

Phidip. What vexes you, my father?

Streps. What! the moon,

This day both new and old.

Phidip. Both in one day?

Ridiculous!

Streps. No matter—'Tis the day

Will bring my creditors upon my back
All in a swarm together.

Phidip. Let them swarm!

We'll smother 'em if they dare so to miscal
One day as two days.

Streps. What should hinder them?

Phidip. What, do you ask? Can the same woman be
Both young and old at once?

Streps. They speak by law:
The statute bears them out.

Phidip. But they misconstrue
The spirit of the statute.

Streps. What is that?

Phidip. Time-honor'd Solon was the people's friend—

Streps. This makes not to the case of new or old.

Phidip. And he appointed two days for the process,
The old and new day—for citation that,
This for discharge—

Streps. Why did he name two days?

Phidip. Why, but that one might warn men of their
debts,

The other serve them to escape the payment;
Else were they laid by th' heels as sure as fate
On the new moon ensuing.

Streps. Wherefore then
Upon the former day do they commence
Their doles and first fruits at the Prytaneum,
And not at the new moon?

Phidip. Because, forsooth,
They're hungry feeders, and make haste to thrust
Their greedy fingers in the public dish.

Streps. Hence then, ye witless creditors, begone !
 We are the wise ones, we are the true sort ;
 Ye are but blocks, mob, cattle, empty casks—

“ Therefore with ecstasy I’ll raise
 “ My jocund voice in fortune’s praise,
 “ And oh rare son !—Oh happy me !
 “ The burden of my song shall be ;
 “ For hark ! each passing neighbour cries—
 “ All hail, Strepsiades the wise !
 “ Across the forum as I walk,
 “ I and my son the public talk,
 “ All striving which shall have to boast
 “ He prais’d me first, or prais’d me most—
 “ And now, my son, my welcome guest,
 “ Enter my house and grace my feast.”

[*Exeunt.*

(*Pasias and a Witness.*)

Pasias. Should this man be permitted to go on
 At such a desperate rate ? It must not be.
 Better for him to have brok’n up at once
 Than to be thus beset. Therefore it is
 That I am forc’d upon this hostile course,
 Empowering you to summon this my debtor
 For the recovery of my own—Good sooth,
 I will not put my country to the blush,
 But I must rouse Strepsiades—

(*Strepsiades re-enters.*)

Streps. Who’s this ?

Pasias. The old and new day calls upon you, sir.

Streps. Bear witness that this man has nam’d two days—
 And for what debt do you assail me thus ?

Pasias. For twelve good pounds that you took up at
interest

To pay for your son's racer.

Streps. I a racer?

Do you not hear him? Can you not all witness
How mortally and from my soul I hate
All the whole racing calendar?

Pasias. What then?

You took the gods to witness you would pay me.

Streps. I grant you, in my folly I did swear,
But then my son had not attain'd the art
Of the new logic unconfutable.

Pasias. And have you now the face to stand it out
Against all evidence?

Streps. Assuredly—

Else how am I the better for my schooling?

Pasias. And dare you, knowing it to be a falsehood,
Take the great gods to witness to your oath,
When I shall put it to you?

Streps. What great gods?

Pasias. Mercurius, Neptune, Jupiter himself—

Streps. Yes, and stake down three-farthings as a handsel
That I will take the oath, so help me Jove!

Pasias. Insolent wretch, you'll perish in your folly,

Streps. Oh! that this madman was well scrubb'd with
salt

To save his brains from addling!

Pasias. Out upon't!

Do you make game of me?

Streps. —I warrant me
He'll take at least six gallons for a dressing.

Pasias. So may great Jove and all the gods deal with me
As I will handle you for this buffoonery?

Streps. I thank you for your gods—They're pleasant
fellows—

And for your Jupiter, the learn'd and wise
Hold him a very silly thing to swear by.¹

Pasias. 'Tis well, rash man, 'tis well! The time will
come

When you shall wish these vaunting words unsaid,
But will you pay the debt or will you not?

Say, and dismiss me.

Streps. Set your mind at rest ;
You shall have satisfaction in a twinkling—

(*Steps aside.*)

Pasias. What think you of this chap?

¹ The exultation of Strepsiades upon receiving his son out of the hands of Socrates, the confidence with which he now faces creditors, of late so much dreaded, and the daring contempt he avows for Jupiter and the gods, are given with great comic spirit, and in the boldest strain of satire, through the whole of this and the preceding scenes. The pretences he sets up for parrying the lawful demands of his creditors are so strictly deducible from the lectures he had received from the philosopher, that every thing either said or done by father and son is by the cunning of the poet contrived to spring so pointedly and precisely from the dictates of their master, that nothing is allowed to escape, for which he is not made responsible, whilst the school of Socrates is held up to the audience as the source of every species of fraud, injustice, and impiety; and all this is done with a subtlety, that only makes the aim more certain and the stroke more severe.

Witness. That he will pay you.

(*Strepsiades returns.*)

Streps. Where is this dun of mine? Come hither, friend,
How do you call this thing?

Pasias. A kneading trough,
Or as we say, a *cardopus*—

Streps. Go to!

Dost think I'll pay my money to a blockhead,
That calls this kneading-trough a *cardopus*?

I tell you, man, it is a *cardopa*—

Go, go, you will not get a doit from me,
You and your *cardopus*.

Pasias. Will you not pay me?

Streps. Assure yourself I will not—Hence, begone!
Will you not beat your march, and quit my doors?

Pasias. I'm gone, but take this with you, if I live
I'll sue you in the Prytaneum before night.

Streps. You'll lose your suit, and your twelve pounds
besides.

I'm sorry for your loss, but who can help it?
You may ev'n thank your *cardopus* for that.

[*Exit Pasias and Witness.*]

(*Amynias enters followed by a Witness.*)

Amynias. Ah me, ah me!

Streps. Who's that with his—Ah me?
Whom has *Carcinus*¹ sent amongst us now—
Which of his doleful deities?—

¹ He glances at Carcinus, a very voluminous tragic writer, to the amount of 160 dramas. He introduced some of the

Amyntias. Alas!

Would you know who I am? Know then I am
A wretch made up of woes—

Streps. A woeful wretch—

Granted! pass on.

Amyntias. Oh inauspicious chance!

Oh ye hard hearted, chariot breaking fates!

Oh! Pallas my destroyer, what a crash

Is this that you have giv'n me!

Streps. Hah! what ails you?

Of what can you accuse Tlepolemus?

Amyntias. Mock not my miseries, but bid your son
Repay what he has borrow'd.

Streps. Take me with you—

What should my son repay?

Amyntias. The sum I lent him.

Streps. Is that it? Then your case is desperate;

Truly you're out of luck.

Amyntias. I'm out of every thing—

I overthrew my chariot—By the gods

That's being out, I take it, with a vengeance.

Streps. Say rather you are kick'd by an ass²—a trifle!

immortals in ridiculous situations, using the like doleful expressions as he puts here in the mouth of the money lender.

¹ This is a parody upon some passage in one of Carcinus's tragedies, or of his son Xenocles, in which Tlepolemus was probably the hero of the fable.

² There is a play upon words in the original, which is not possible to transfuse into the translation. The learned reader will understand the difficulty.

Amyntas. But, sir, my lawful money is no trifle;
I shall not chuse to be kick'd out of that.

Streps. I'll tell you what you are—Out of your wits.

Amyntas. How so?

Streps. Because your brain seems wondrous leaky.

Amyntas. Look to't! By Mercury, I'll clap you up
If you don't pay me.

Streps. Hark'ye, one short question—
When Jove rains on us does he rain fresh water,
Or only vapors that the sun exhales?
Answer me that.

Amyntas. I care not what he rains;
I trouble not my cap with such conceits.

Streps. And do you think a man, that has no wit
To argue these rare points, will argue me
Out of my money?

Amyntas. Let your debt go on,
And pay me up the interest.

Streps. What is that?
What kind of thing is that same interest?

Amyntas. A thing it is that grows from day to day,
And month to month, swelling as time rolls on
To a round sum of money.

Streps. Well defin'd!
One question more—What think you of the sea?
Is it not fuller now than heretofore?

Amyntas. No, by the Gods! not fuller, but as full:
That is my judgment of it.

Streps. Oh thou miser!
That so would'st stint the ocean, and yet cram
Thy swelling coffers till they overflow—

Fetch me a whip, that I may lash him hence :
Take to your heels—begone !

Amynias. I will convoke
My witnesses against you.

Streps. Start ! set off !—
Do you take rest ?—away !

Amynias. Is not this outrage ?

Streps. Will you not bolt ; will you not buckle kindly
Into your geers, or must I mount and goad you
Under the crupper, till you kick and wince
For very madness ? Oho ! Are you off ?
A welcome riddance—All the devils drive
You and your cursed chariot hence together.

[*Exeunt.*

Manet Chorus. “ Mark here how rarely it succeeds

“ To build our trust on guilty deeds :

“ Mark how this old cajoling elf,

“ Who sets a trap to catch himself,

“ Falsely believes he has found the way

“ To hold his creditors at bay.

“ Too late he'll curse the sophists' school,

“ That taught his son to cheat by rule,

“ And train'd the modest lips of youth

“ In the vile art of torturing truth ;

“ A modern logic much in use,

“ Invented for the law's abuse ;

“ A subtle knack of spying flaws

“ To cast in doubt the clearest cause,

“ Whereby, in honesty's despite,

“ The wrong side triumphs o'er the right—

“ Alas ! short triumph he must have,
 “ Who glories that his son’s a knave :
 “ Ah foolish sire, the time will come[†]
 “ You’ll wish that son of your’s were dumb.”

Strepsiades, Phidippides, Chorus.

Streps. Hoa there ! What hoa ! for pity’s sake some help !
 Friends, kinsmen, countrymen ! turn out and help !
 Oh ! my poor head, my cheeks are bruised to jelly—
 Help by all means !—Why, thou ungracious cub,
 Thy father wouldst thou beat ?

Phidip. Assuredly.

Streps. There, there ! He owns that he would beat
 his father.

Phidip. I own it, good my father !

Streps. Parricide !

Impious assassin ! Sacrilegious wretch !

Phidip. All, all, and more—You cannot please me
 better ;

I glory in these attributes. Go on !

[†] The moral and prophetic Chorus again denounces punishment and repentance upon the infamous expedients which this old fellow has resorted to for defrauding his creditors, and the succeeding incident fully verifies the prediction. I am fully persuaded there is no Greek drama now in our hands, where the Chorus takes a part so intimately connected with the plot, as in this comedy : here it is essential, and delivers those sentiments, which reason dictates, and the poet wishes to inspire into the minds of his hearers——

Oh ! si sic semper dixisset !

Streps. Monster of turpitude !

Phidip. Crown me with roses !

Streps. Wretch, will you strike your parent ?

Phidip. Piously,

And will maintain the right, by which I do it.

Streps. Oh shameless villain ! can there be a right
Against all nature so to treat a father ?

Phidip. That I shall soon make clear to your conviction.

Streps. You, you convince me ?

Phidip. With the greatest ease :

And I can work the proof two several ways ;
Therefore make choice between them.

Streps. What do you mean ?

Phidip. I mean to say we argue up or down—
Take which you like. It comes to the same end.

Streps. Aye, and a precious end you've brought it to,
If all my care of you must end in this,
That I have put you in the way to beat me,
(Which is a thing unnatural and profane)
And after justify it.¹

Phidip. That I'll do
By process clear and categorical,

¹ It is not easy to conceive any incident more pointedly severe than this, which the poet has employed for interesting the spectators in his attack upon the sophists. A son exhibited in the impious act of striking his father, and justifying the crime upon principle, is surely as bitter an invective against the schools of the philosophers as can be devised.

That you shall fairly own yourself a convert
To a most wholesome cudgelling.

Streps. Come on!

Give me your arguments—but spare your blows.

*Chorus.*¹ How to restrain this headstrong son of yours
Behoves you now, old man, to find the means,
For sure he could not be thus confident
Without some cause; something there needs must be,
Some strong possession of himself within,
That buoys him up to this high pitch of daring,
This bold assumption; which that we may know,
Give us distinctively the whole detail
From first to last whence this contention sprang,
So shall we hear, and hearing judge betwixt you.

Streps. So please you then I will the cause unfold
Of this base treatment to your patient ears,
And thus it stands—When we had supp'd together,
As you all know, in friendly sort, I bade him
Take up his lute and give me the good song
Of old Simonides,² who shear'd his ram;
But he directly scouted my request—
It was a fashion out of date forsooth—

¹ The interposition of the Chorus in this place is peculiarly apposite, in as much as it draws out the relation of what had passed between the father and son, which neither of them could else have given, and which it is, however, important for the audience to hear.

² Some popular ballad of Simonides, the lyric poet, of which I can discover no other record.

He would not sit twanging the lute, not he ;
 'Twas not for him to cackle o'er his wine,
 As if he were some wench working the hand-mill¹—
 'Twas vulgar and unseemly—

Phidip. Grossly so ;
 And was it not high time that I should beat you,
 Who had no better manners than to set
 Your guest a chirping like a grasshopper ?

Streps. These were his very words, and more than
 these ;

For by and bye he told me that Simonides
 Was a most paltry poet. This you'll own
 Was a tough morsel, yet I gulp'd it down,
 And pass'd it off with bidding him recite
 Some passage out of Æschylus, withal
 Tendering a myrtle wreath, as custom is,
 To grace the recitation—He forsooth,
 Flouting my tender, instantly replied—
 “ I hold your Æschylus, of all our poets,
 “ First of the spouters, incoherent, harsh,
 “ Precipitous and turgid.”—Oh my friends,
 Was not this more than flesh and blood should bear ?
 Yet, yet I smother'd rage within my heart
 And calmly said—“ Call something else to mind
 “ More to your taste and from some modern bard,
 “ So it be good withal and worth the hearing—”
 Whereat, would you believe it ? he began

¹ The women, whilst at work upon the hand-mill, were in the custom of cheering their labor with a song, and these ballads were thence called *Ἐπιμύλαιο ᾠδαί*.

Repeating from Euripides—Great Jove,
 Guard my chaste ears from such another dose !
 A perilous long-winded tale of incest
 'Twixt son and daughter of the same sad mother. ¹
 Sick to the soul I spurn'd at such declaiming,
 Adding, as well I might, all that my scorn
 Of such vile trash could add ; till, to be short,
 Words begat words, and blows too as it prov'd,
 For leaping from his seat he sprung upon me,
 Struck, buffeted, and bang'd me out of measure,
 Throttled me, pounded me well nigh to dust—

Phidip. And what less does that heretic deserve,
 Who will not praise Euripides, the first
 In wisdom of all poets ?

Streps. He the first !
 How my tongue itches !—but the rogue is ready ;
 He'll beat me if I answer.

Phidip. And with reason.

Streps. What reason, graceless cub, will bear you out
 For beating me, who in your baby age
 Caress'd you, dandled you upon my knee,
 Watch'd every motion, humor'd all your wants ?
 Then if you lisp'd a syllable I caught it—
Bryn cried the bantling—straight I gave you drink :
Mamman ² it mew'd—and that forsooth was bread :

¹ Euripides formed a tragedy on the story of Macareus the son of Æolus, who violated his uterine sister Canace, for which crime he was put to death by his father. To this drama Ovid alludes in his *Tr.* II. 284.—

Nobilis est Canace fratris amore sui. (*Brunck.*)

² *Bryn*, *Mamman*, words of the nursery.

Nay, I perform'd the nurse's dirtiest task,
And held you out before me at your needs ;
And now in my necessity you show'd
No mercy to the pressing calls of nature,
But having pummel'd me till my poor bowels
Could hold no longer, kept me fast imprison'd
To struggle with occasion as I could.

Chor. Now every young man's heart beats an alarm,
Anxious to hear his advocate's appeal ;
Which if he can establish, the same right
By him asserted will on all devolve,
And beating then will be so much in vogue
That old men's skins will be reduc'd to cobwebs—
Now you, that hold up this new paradox,
Look well how you defend it, for it asks
No trivial reasons to enforce persuasion.

Phidip. How gratefully the mind receives new lights,
Emerging from the shades of prejudice,
And casting old establishments aside !
Time was but now, when every thought of mine
Was centred in the stable ; then I had not
Three words upon my tongue without a stumble ;
But now, since I've been put into the way
Of knowing better things, and the fine art
Of subtil disputation, I am bold
To meet this question, and convince my hearers
How right it is to punish this old sinner.

Streps. Mount, mount your chariot ! Oh, that I could
see you
Seated again behind your favorite horses,
Tho' 'twere with four in hand, so that you kept

From driving me at such a pelting rate.

Phidip. Now then I ask you, gathering up my thread
Where it was broken off, if you, my father,
When I was but a stripling, spar'd my back?

Streps. No, for I studied all things for your good,
And therefore I corrected you.

Phidip. Agreed,
I also am like studious of your good,
And therefore I most lovingly correct you ;
If beating be a proof of love, you have it
Plenteous in measure, for by what exemption
Is your most sacred carcase freed from stripes
And mine made subject to them? Am not I
Free-born as you? Say, if the son's in tears,
Should not the father weep?

Streps. By what one rule
Of equity?

Phidip. What equity were that
If none but children are to be chastis'd?
And grant they were, the proverb's in your teeth,
Which says old age is but a second childhood.
Again, if tears are seen to follow blows,
Ought not old men to expiate faults with tears
Rather than children, who have more to plead
In favor of their failings?

Streps. Where's the law
That warrants this proceeding? There's none such.

Phidip. And what was your law-maker but a man,
Mortal as you and I are? And tho' time
Has sanctified his statutes, may not I
Take up the cause of youth, as he of age,

And publish a new ordinance for leave
By the right-filial to correct our fathers,
Remitting and consigning to oblivion
All ex-post-facto beating? Look at instinct—
Inquire of nature how the brute creation
Kick at their parents, which in nothing differ
From lordly man, except that they compile
No laws, and hold their rights without a statute.

Streps. If you are thus for pecking at your father
Like a young fighting-cock, why don't you peck
Your dinner from the dunghill, and at night
Roost on a perch?

Phidip. The cases do not tally,
Nor does my master Socrates prescribe
Rules so absurd.

Streps. Cease then from beating me;
Else you preclude yourself.

Phidip. As how preclude?

Streps. Because the right I have of beating you
Will be your right in time over your son,
When you shall have one.

Phidip. But if I have none,
All my sad hours are lost, and you die laughing.

Streps. There's no denying that.—How say you, sirs?
Methinks there is good matter in his plea;
And as for us old sinners, truth to say,
If we deserve a beating we must bear it.

Phidip. Hear me—there's more to come—

Streps. Then I am lost,
For I can bear no more.

Phidip. Oh fear it not,

Rather believe what I have now to tell you
Will cause you to make light of what is past,
'Twill bring such comfort to you.

Streps. Let me have it :

If it be comfort, give it me.

Phidip. Then know,

Henceforth I am resolv'd to beat my mother
As I have beaten you.

Streps. How say you? How?

Why this were to out-do all you have done.

Phidip. But what if I have got a proof in petto
To show the moral uses of this beating?

Streps. Show me a proof that you have hang'd yourself,
And with your tutor Socrates beside you
Gone to the devil together in a string;
Those moral uses I will thank you for—
Oh inauspicious goddesses, O Clouds!
In you confiding all these woes fall on me.

Chor. Evil events from evil causes spring,
And what you suffer flows from what you've done.

Streps. Why was I not forewarn'd? You saw me old,
And practis'd on my weak simplicity.

Chor. 'Tis not for us to warn a wilful sinner;
We stay him not, but let him run his course,
Till by misfortunes rous'd, his conscience wakes,
And prompts him to appease th' offended gods.

Streps. I feel my sorrows, but I own them just :¹

¹ This appeal to the Chorus, their reply to it, and the old man's acknowledgment that he merited the punishment he met

Yes, ye reforming Clouds, I'm duly punish'd
 For my intended fraud.—And now, my son,
 Join hands with me and let us forth together
 To wreak our vengeance on those base deceivers,
 That Chærephon and Socrates the chief,
 Who have cajol'd us both.

Phidip. Grace forbid
 I should lift up my hand against my masters.

Streps. Nay, nay, but rather dread avenging Jove,
 God of your ancestors, and him revere.

Phidip. You're mad, methinks, to talk to me of Jove—
 Is there a god so call'd?

Streps. There is! there is!

Phidip. There is no Jupiter I tell you so;
 Vortex has whirl'd him from his throne, and reigns
 By right of conquest in the thunderer's place.

Streps. 'Tis false, no Vortex whirls but in my brain
 When in my ecstasy I fancied you
 An earthen deity, a farthing god.

Phidip. Laugh at your own dull joke and be a fool!

Streps. Insufferable blockhead that I was;
 What ail'd me thus to court this Socrates,
 Ev'n to the exclusion of the immortal gods?
 O Mercury, forgive me; be not angry,
 Dear tutelary god, but spare me still,
 And cast a pitying eye upon my follies,
 For I have been intemperate of tongue,
 And dearly rue it—Oh my better genius,

with, are finely introduced, and impress a very just and natural
 moral on the catastrophe of the fable.

Inspire me with thy counsel how to act,
 Whether by legal process to assail them,
 Or by 'such apter means as thou may'st dictate.
 I have it! Well hast thou inspir'd the thought;
 Hence with the lazy law; thou art not for it.
 With fire and faggot I will fall upon them,
 And send their school *in fumo* to the Clouds.
 Hoa, Zauthias, hoa! bring forth without delay
 Your ladder and your mattock, mount the roof,
 Break up the rafters, whelm the house upon them,
 And bury the whole hive beneath the ruins.
 Haste! if you love me, haste! Oh, for a torch,
 A blazing torch new lighted, to set fire
 To the infernal edifice.—I warrant me
 I'll soon unhouse the rascals, that now carry
 Their heads so high, and roll them in the dust.

(The School is attacked, and the Disciples run out.)

First Disciple. Fire! Fire!

Streps. If fire is what you want, 'tis here;
 Torch, play your part, and you'll have fire enough.

First Disciple. What are you doing, fellow?

Streps. Chopping logic;
 Arguing a knotty point with your house-beams.

Second Disciple. Oh horror! Who has set our house
 on fire?

Streps. The very man whose cloak you nabb'd so neatly.

Second Disciple. Undone and ruin'd—!

Streps. Heartily I wish it—
 And mean you should so be if this same mattock
 Does not deceive my hopes, and I escape
 With a whole neck.

(Socrates comes forth.)

Socr. Ho! there! What man is that?

You there upon the roof—What are you doing?

Streps. Treading on air—contemplating the sun—

Socr. Ah me! I'm suffocated, smother'd, lost—

(Chærephon appears.)

Chærephon. Wretch that I am, I'm melted, scorch'd,
consum'd!—

Streps. Blasphemers, why did you insult the gods?

Dash, drive, demolish them! Their crimes are many,

But their contemptuous treatment of the gods,

Their impious blasphemies, exceed them all.

Chor. Break up!—The Chorus have fulfill'd their part.

GENERAL NOTE

TO

THE CLOUDS.

I HAVE now completed my undertaking, and present to my readers the comedy of the Clouds entire. Conscious that every original must suffer by translation, I have only to request allowances may be made for my author, as well as for myself; still I presume to hope I have caught enough of his spirit, style, and meaning, to add something to the reputation of these Essays, without taking from that of the author of this celebrated drama. Let us for a moment assume what the poet lays down as the moral of his comedy, viz. that the doctrines of the sophists were pernicious to society, and the scheme here adopted for rendering them both ridiculous and detestable, will, I trust, be acknowledged most apposite and most excellent: Let

us suspend for a while our enthusiasm for Socrates, and we cannot withhold our praise from Aristophanes.

It was not the practice of the writers of the old and personal comedy, to be strictly regular in the conduct or construction of their fables; yet in this drama, if we except his address to the spectators, and, perhaps, his scene between the just and unjust declaimer (which is, in some degree, though not altogether, episodical) we find our poet strictly adhering to all the best rules of composition. His plot, simple, clear, and sufficiently interesting, opens upon the audience in a very masterly and striking style, is wrought up and supported by a variety of comic incidents through the middle scenes, and in the catastrophe closes with great spirit and strict poetical justice, administered to the several characters which it employs. Of these, Strepsiades is the most prominent; a character ingeniously contrived to reflect the greatest possible ridicule upon the pedantry and chicanery of the sophists, by the comic contrast of his whimsical rusticity. A father, oppressed by debts and expenses, brought upon him by an extravagant and thoughtless son, flies to any resources, however evil, for extricating himself from his embarrassments; these resources he fancies he has discovered in the school of Socrates and Chærephon, and that school (how justly is not now the question) is put forward by the poet, and

selected for the purpose of concentrating his attack to some determined point; he wages war against the sophists in general, but considering this famous school as their citadel, and its great master Socrates as their general, he manfully assails him, reserving Chærephon to the last scene only, in which he momentarily appears, but exhibiting Socrates personally upon the stage through the whole progress of the play.

It is true, that the charge, upon which he was condemned many years after, is here strongly urged against him; and Strepsiades, who had been betrayed into a contemptuous disavowal of Jupiter and the gods, by the arguments of Socrates, makes a solemn recantation of his errors, charging them upon the philosopher; but in the very instant whilst he is debating within himself—

Whether by legal process to assail them—

He peremptorily rejects the idea, and proceeds to wreak his vengeance upon the school in a manner perfectly ludicrous, and evidently contrived for mere farcical effect. Had the life of the philosopher been his aim, could we suppose him a party in the cabal of Anytus and Melitus, here would have been an opportunity for laying the foundation of a *legal process*, which, on the contrary, he altogether puts aside, and batters him with mere stage artillery—*telum imbelles, sine ictu.*

The fact evidently appears, that, as for Jupiter and the popular gods, Aristophanes cares as little for them, as he supposes the philosopher to do. The tragic poets, indeed, treated them with respect, because it was for their purpose to uphold them; in their solemn subjects, especially of the Homeric cast, every thing moves at the will and disposition of the immortal deities; but the comic authors seem to have spared the gods as little as they did mankind; and it is not in this comedy alone, but in every other now remaining, that we find Aristophanes treating them with the most undisguised and daring contempt. To the Deities of Socrates, who form the chorus in this play, he has been infinitely more gracious, having assigned to them a part highly honorable for its morality, and replete with sentiments both interesting and instructive. Had he been a true believer, he would never have invented blasphemies for Strepsiades so pointedly of his own suggestion, but would either have retailed them from Socrates in his very words, or marked them with the strongest abhorrence upon their delivery, whereas, on the contrary, he seems to hug the occasion for insulting them, and enjoys the jest of his own making.

And now, if the English reader can find amusement in the perusal of this translated comedy, I have gained one principal object in the undertaking; but I am bold enough

to hope the learned reader will be at the trouble of comparing it with the original, to which I flatter myself he will find it as close as the languages can approximate. I believe no translation from the Latin can, in the nature of things, be so near. I have only to add, that in the progress of the work, which has been long in hand, I made suit to many learned men for the assistance of their remarks, but obtained not one word in answer from any one of them, but civil apologies for declining my request; I therefore stand responsible for the whole, and shall candidly and thankfully attend to any true and liberal criticisms, with which the private readers, or public reviewers of this translation, shall be pleased to honor it.

Richard Cumberland.

October 20th, 1797.

Plutus,
THE
GOD OF RICHES.
A Comedy,

Translated from the Original Greek of

ARISTOPHANES:

WITH LARGE NOTES, EXPLANATORY AND CRITICAL.

TRANSLATED BY HENRY FIELDING, ESQ.

AND

THE REVEREND MR. YOUNG.

Dedication

TO THE

RIGHT HONORABLE THE

LORD TALBOT.

MY LORD,

IN an age when learning hath so few friends, and fewer patrons, it might require an apology to introduce an ancient Greek poet to a person of an exalted station.

For could the poet himself revive, and attend many such in his own person, he would be esteemed an unfashionable visitor, and might, perhaps, find some difficulty in gaining admittance.

But when we reflect on the revered name of the late Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, who, at the head of the greatest excellences and abilities,

which ever warmed the heart, or embellished the understanding of man, preserved (which is, perhaps, the highest of human perfections) the most tender regard for the distressed ; when we recollect what manifest tokens you have given that you inherit the virtues of that truly great and amiable person, we are emboldened, rather than discouraged, by this very consideration, to address the following attempt to your Lordship.

Permit us then, my Lord, to recommend *Aristophanes* ; and with him, the distressed, and at present, declining, state of learning to your protection.

The greatness of this author's genius need not be mentioned to your Lordship ; but there is a much stronger recommendation to one of your known principles. He exerted that genius in the service of his country. He attacked and exposed its enemies and betrayers with a boldness and integrity, which must endear his memory to every true and sincere patriot.

In presenting *Aristophanes*, therefore, to your Lordship, we present him to one, whom he, had he been an Englishman, would have chosen for his patron. Permit us, therefore, to make him this amends for the injury done him in our translation, and to subscribe ourselves,

My LORD,

YOUR LORDSHIP'S

most Obedient,

and most Humble Servants,

HENRY FIELDING,

WILLIAM YOUNG.

Preface.

As we intend, if we proceed in this work, to prefix to it a very large dissertation on the nature and end of Comedy, with an account of its original, rise, and progress to this day; which will include a full view of the Grecian stage: we shall at present confine ourselves to a very few words, in recommendation of our author himself, and in apology for this translation.

ARISTOPHANES was born about four hundred and sixty years before Christ, most probably in an island called *Ægina*, near Athens, where it is certain he had an estate. He is one of the oldest professors of the Comic art, and indeed lived so very near the original of the drama, that, besides the admiration due to his deep discernment in human nature, to the incomparable humor of his characters, to his wit, style, numbers, &c. which have received great eulogiums both from ancient and modern critics; we must be astonished at the regularity and order of his Comedies, to which in more than two thousand years successive poets have been able to add so little.

We have not room here to relate half, which hath been written in praise of our author, the honors which he received, not only from his own countrymen, who ordered his name to be enrolled above those of all his cotemporaries; but from the Emperor of Persia, who considered him merely from the force of his wit, and the uses he applied it to, as a person of the greatest consequence in Athens.

But as the esteem of one great, and wise, and good man, is infinitely preferable to the giddy shouts of the rabble, or to the capricious favor of kings, we hasten to the account given by Olympiodorus in his life of Plato; who tells us, that a very intimate acquaintance subsisted between the philosopher and the poet; and that the former learnt, from the writings of the latter, the art of adapting in his Dialogues the diction to the character of the speaker. Indeed it is impossible to read the works of both with any attention, without observing the most striking similitude in their expression; both being remarkable for that Attic purity of language, and the elegant use of those particles, which, though they give such an inexpressible nervous force to the diction of these authors, have been represented as expletives, and useless by the ignorance of posterity.

The affection of Plato for Aristophanes is reported to have been so extremely strong, that, after the death of the philosopher, a volume of the other's comedies were found in his bed. The following epigram likewise is said to have been his:

*Αἱ χάριτες τέμενός τι λαβεῖν ὅπερ οὐχὶ πεσεῖται
Ζητοῦσαι, Ψυχὴν εὖρον Ἀριστοφάνους.*

The Graces, endeavoring to obtain a never falling temple, found one in the Genius of Aristophanes.

We know that Plato, in his *Phædon*, speaks against a comic poet with the utmost vehemence; and, in his apology for Socrates, mentions Aristophanes among his false accusers by name; and that *Ælian* ascribes the death of Socrates to the ridicule brought on him by the comedy of "The Clouds;" with which *Diogenes Laertius* seems to assent: but we question not refuting this story, if ever it be our fortune to translate that play.

But farther, the elegance of his style, and the justness of his sentiments, recommended him, notwithstanding his impurities, to the primitive Fathers of the Church. Thus we find him several times quoted by *Clemens Alexandrinus*; and there is a tradition, that *St. Chrysostom* held him in so great favor, as never to sleep without one of his comedies under his pillow, in order to begin the next day's reading with the works of the most correct writer. And to this perhaps we may justly ascribe that Father's having surpassed all the rest in the purity of his diction; and hence likewise he probably drew that remarkable acrimony of style, in which he hath so severely exposed the faults of the fair sex; which latter we the rather mention, as it takes off an ill-natured observation, which might otherwise have insinuated, that the purity of our author's diction did not alone recommend him to the Father for a bed-fellow.

To conclude this part of our Preface, *Longinus* gives the character of *sublime* to our author's diction; *Horace* commends the freedom and justice, with which he lashed the vices of his time: indeed so great hath been always

his reputation, that, as M. Dacier observes, to deny his merit, would be *to give the lie to all antiquity*.

It may seem therefore impossible, that the works of such an author should fail of success in any language, unless through the fault of the translation; to which our reader will, I suppose, if he finds this play disagree with his taste, impute it.

There are some, I am told, *professed* admirers of Aristophanes in the Greek, who assert the impossibility of translating him; which, in my opinion, is asserting, in other words, the impossibility of understanding him: for sure a man must have a very superficial knowledge of his own language, who cannot communicate his ideas in it. If the original conveys clear and adequate ideas to me, I must be capable of delivering them to others in that language, which I am myself a perfect master of. I am deceived, therefore, if the complaints of translators do not generally arise from the same cause with those I have often heard made in conversation by men, who have mistaken some floating imperfect images in their minds for clear and distinct conceptions, and bitterly lament that they are *unable to express themselves*: whereas a man, who conceives clearly, will, I apprehend, always express himself so.

I remember a translation of a celebrated line in Lucan into French, which is thus:

“*Victrix causa Deis placuit, sed victa Catoni.*”

“*Les Dieux servent César, mais Caton suit Pompée.*”

The sense of the Latin is,

The Gods embraced the cause of the conqueror, but *Cato* that of the conquered.

The sense of the French is,

The Gods preserved *Cæsar*, but *Cato* followed *Pompey*.

Will any man say, that this Frenchman understood his author, or that Lucan had conveyed the same idea to him, which he himself had conceived when he wrote that excellent and beautiful compliment to Cato.

To mention no more instances, (for thousands occur in most translations) I am convinced that the complaint of the difficulty of rendering an author in the translator's own language, arises commonly from the difficulty of comprehending him.

I do not, however, affect to say, that a translation labors under no disadvantage, or that it can be entirely *alter et idem*.

On the contrary, I am sensible, that in this particular undertaking we have three principal ones to encounter.

First, We are to render a purer and more copious language in that which is impurer and more confined. This drives us often from literally pursuing the original, and makes a periphrasis necessary to explain a single word, or the concisest expression :

Secondly, There is in Aristophanes a great deal of that wit, which consists merely in the words themselves, and is so inseparable from them, that it is impossible to transfer it into any others : but this is a species of wit, which our readers of the better taste will not much repine at being deprived of. It is indeed sometimes found in good authors, where it appears like a tinsel-ornament on a beautiful woman, to catch the admiration of vulgar eyes, and to offend persons of real taste. However, that we might

oblige all, and be as faithful to our author as possible, where we have not been able to preserve such facetiousness in our text, we have generally remarked it in our notes.

The last disadvantage I shall mention, is the harmony, which, in many places of the original, is excellently sweet. This, perhaps, I should have thought impossible to preserve, had not the inimitable author of the “*Essay on Man*” taught me a system of philosophy in English numbers, whose sweetness is scarce inferior to that of Theocritus himself: but

“*Non omnia possumus omnes.*”

These are indeed objections, which can only be made by our most learned readers, whom perhaps our close adherence to our author, and particularly in the simplicity of his language, may in some measure conciliate to us. The most dangerous and fatal enemies we are to dread, are those, whom this very simplicity may offend; the admirers of that pretty, dapper, brisk, smart, pert dialogue, which hath lately flourished on our stage. This was first introduced with infinite wit by Wycherley, and continued with still less and less by his successors, till it is at last degenerated into such sort of pleasantry as this in the “*Provoked Husband* :—

Manly. If that were my case, I believe I should certainly sleep in another house.

L. Grace. How do you mean?

Manly. Only a compliment, Madam.

L. Grace. A compliment!

Manly. Yes, Madam, in rather turning myself out of doors than her.

L. Grace. Don't you think that would be going too far?

Manly. I don't know but it might, Madam: for in strict justice I think she ought rather to go than I.

Again.

L. Grace. Can a husband love a wife too well?

Manly. As easily, Madam, as a wife may love her husband too little.

L. Grace. 'Tis pity *but* your mistress should hear your doctrine.

Manly. Pity me, Madam, when I marry the woman *that* won't hear it, &c. &c. &c.

This sort of stuff, which is, I think, called genteel comedy, and in which our laureate succeeded so excellently well, both as author and actor, had some years ago taken almost sole possession of our stage, and banished Shakespear, Fletcher, Johnson, &c. from it; the last of whom, of all our English poets, seems chiefly to have studied and imitated Aristophanes, which we have remarked more than once in our notes. To such therefore of our readers, whose palates are vitiated with the theatrical diet I have above-mentioned, I would recommend a play or two of Johnson's, to be taken as a kind of preparative before they enter on this play; for otherwise the simplicity of its style, for want of being sweetened with modern quaintness, may, like old wine after sugar-plums, appear insipid, and without any flavor. But our readers of a purer taste and sounder judgment, will be able, we apprehend, to digest good sense, manly wit, just satire, and true humor, without those garnishments which we could with infinitely greater ease have supplied (as others have done) in the room of

our author's meaning, than have preserved it in his own plain simplicity of style.

It may be expected that we should here take some notice of the other translations of this play, especially those two of M. Dacier and Mr. Theobald, which we have sometimes taken the liberty of dissenting from in our translation, and on which we have commented with some freedom in our notes; but if we are right on these occasions, little apology will be required; if wrong, we shall gladly embrace correction, nor persist obstinately in error. I own, we have more to answer to the memory of the lady than to Mr. Theobald, who, being a critic of great nicety himself, and great diligence in correcting mistakes in others, cannot be offended at the same treatment. Indeed there are some parts of his work, which I should be more surprised at, had he not informed us in his dedication, that he was assisted in it by M. Dacier. We are not therefore much to wonder, if Mr. Theobald errs a little, when we find his guide going before out of the way.

We shall conclude our Preface with the argument of this play, as left us by Mr. Addison in his 464th Spectator.

“Chremylus, who was an old and a good man, and withal exceeding poor, being desirous to leave some riches to his son, consults the oracle of Apollo upon the subject. The oracle bids him follow the first man he should see upon his going out of the temple. The person he chanced to see was to appearance an old sordid blind man, but, upon his following him from place to place, he at last found by his own confession, that he was Plutus, the God of Riches, and that he was just come out of the house of a miser. Plutus further told him, that when he

was a boy, he used to declare, that, as soon as he came to age, he would distribute wealth to none but virtuous and just men; upon which, Jupiter considering the pernicious consequences of such a resolution, took his sight away from him, and left him to stroll about the world in the blind condition wherein Chremylus beheld him. With much ado Chremylus prevailed upon him to go to his house, where he met an old woman in a tattered raiment, who had been his guest for many years, and whose name was Poverty. The old woman refusing to turn out so easily as he would have her, he threatened to banish her, not only from his own house, but out of all Greece, if she made any more words upon the matter. Poverty on this occasion pleads her cause very notably, and represents to her old landlord that, should she be driven out of the country, all their trades, arts and sciences would be driven out with her; and that if every one was rich, they would never be supplied with those pomps, ornaments and conveniences of life, which made riches desirable. She likewise represented to him the several advantages which she bestowed upon her votaries, in regard to their shape, their health, and their activity, by preserving them from gout, dropsies, unwieldiness, and intemperance. But, whatever she had to say for herself, she was at last forced to troop off. Chremylus immediately considered how he might restore Plutus to his sight; and in order to it conveyed him to the temple of Æsculapius, who was famous for cures and miracles of this nature. By this means the Deity recovered his eyes, and began to make a right use of them, by enriching every one that was distinguished by piety towards the Gods, and justice towards men; and at

the same time by taking away his gifts from the impious and undeserving. This produces several merry incidents, till in the last act Mercury descends with great complaints from the Gods, that, since the good men were grown rich, they had received no sacrifices, which is confirmed by a priest of Jupiter, who enters with a remonstrance, that since this late innovation he was reduced to a starving condition, and could not live upon his office. Chremylus, who, in the beginning of the play, was religious in his poverty, concludes it with a proposal, which was relished by all the good men, who were now grown rich as well as himself, that they should carry Plutus in a solemn procession to the temple, and instal him in the place of Jupiter. This allegory instructed the Athenians in two points, first, as it vindicated the conduct of providence in its ordinary distributions of wealth; and in the next place, as it showed the great tendency of riches to corrupt the morals of those, who possessed them."

Dramatis Personae.

MEN.

PLUTUS, *the God of Riches.*

CHREMYLUS, } *Two old Yeomen in decayed circum-*
BLEPSIDEMUS, } *stances.*

DICÆUS, *a just and honest Man.*

SYCOPHANTES, *a Sycophant, or common Informer.*

NEANISCUS, *a young Gallant.*

MERCURY.

PRIEST of Jupiter.

CARIO, *a Slave belonging to Chremylus.*

CHORUS of Yeomen.

WOMEN.

The Wife of Chremylus.

An Old Woman.

SCENE—ATHENS.

PLUTUS,
THE GOD OF RICHES.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Scene, the street in Athens before the house of Chremylus.

CARIO and CHREMYLUS following PLUTUS.

Cario. O JUPITER, and all ye Gods!¹ what a vexatious thing it is to be the slave of a mad master! for, be the servant's advice never so excellent, if his master takes it into his head not to follow it, the poor domestic is by necessity forced to partake all the bad consequences.²

¹ *And all ye Gods.* Madam Dacier hath thought proper to degrade the rest of the Gods from the text; but Mr. Theobald hath piously restored them. The words are here a literal translation from the Greek; and indeed we have endeavoured through the whole to stick as close to our author as possible: we have not, however, thought it necessary to retain every oath, unless where it gives a peculiar energy to the sentence: for as swearing was no crime among the Greeks, the dialogues even of Plato are full of oaths, and they occur in almost every line of this play; the constant repetition of which would be tiresome to an English reader.

² *To partake all the bad consequences.* Madam Dacier hath translated it, *la moitié des maux*, &c. which Mr. Theo-

Fortune permits not the natural lord¹ to have any power over his own person; but transfers it all to the purchaser. Well! these things are all so. However, I do complain (and my complaint is just) of that oblique deity, who sings forth his oracles from his golden tripod. Who, though he is both a physician and a prophet, a very good one too, as folks say, hath sent my master away in such a fit of the spleen, that with his eyes open he follows behind a blind fellow. Doing thus,² the very reverse of what is agreeable to reason: for, whereas the blind are always led by us who can see, this master of mine follows the guidance of the blind; nay, and compels me also to do the same: and all this without the blind rascal's answering us a single word.³ There is, therefore, no

bald mistaking, hath given the blame of half the master's miscarriages only to the servant.

¹ *The natural lord.* This is the Greek, and truly humorous in this servant, which is a character of impertinence and sauciness, and as well at least supported through the whole play, as any such character in any modern comedy. There is indeed an elegance in the Greek impossible to be entirely preserved: for the same word signifies both lord and owner; we have therefore added the word *natural*.

² *Doing thus, &c.* The mock dignity here, and the solemnity with which this vulgar observation is introduced, is highly suitable to the person who delivers it, and would not fail of pleasing from the mouth of a sensible actor.

³ *Without his answering a single word.* All the commentators and translators too have ascribed this silence to the wrong person. The French and English translators give it to the servant; the Latin to the master. Giraldus indeed

reason why I should be silent any longer ; unless you will tell me, Sir, for what purpose we follow this fellow, I shall be very troublesome, indeed I shall—I know you will not lift¹ your hand against a man with a sacred chaplet on his head.

saw the grammatical construction would not bear it, and therefore would have the genitive case, without any reason, to be put for the nominative. Madam Dacier justly finds fault with the Latin translation ; but surely she is herself as wrong in referring it to Cario, from his saying “there is no reason why I should be silent any longer :” for can any thing be more humorous than these words from a servant, who hath been all this while walking and chattering before his master ? But the Greek construction justifies and requires the translation here given. Dr. Bentley agrees with the Latin translation, but not with the Greek text, which, *more suo*, he first corrected, alters into the nominative case, and then refers the speech to Chremylus : for, says he, Plutus had yet been asked no question. To confirm his opinion, he quotes verses 52 and 60, the former of which makes directly against him, and the latter is nothing to the purpose, as our learned reader will observe.

¹ *You will not lift, &c.* It was the custom among the ancients, when they returned from consulting the oracle, and received a favorable answer, to wear garlands on their heads ; otherwise not ; as is expressly said in the *Œdipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles, v. 82. where the priest concludes Creon to be returned with good news, on seeing him crowned with laurel ; for otherwise, says he, he would not wear it. The scholiast, on this place, tells us, that the slaves likewise were equally intitled to these crowns ; nor was any mark of pre-eminence

Chrem. By Jupiter! if you plague me, I will,—first taking off your chaplet, to punish you the more.

Cario. This is trifling: ¹ I shall never leave off till you tell me who that fellow there is. It is my great affection to you, which makes me so extremely vehemently inquisitive.

Chrem. Well: I will not hide it from thee; for, of all my domestics, I believe thee to be the most faithful, and most expert at concealing² what thou canst of thy master's!

allowed to their masters. Madam Dacier makes a pretty observation on this custom: "It gave us to understand," says she, "that in the temples the whole world is on an equal condition, and that there is no distinction of persons before God, who is no less the father of slaves than of freemen; and while they were thus crowned, their masters durst not beat nor chide them. And it was this privilege which gave Cario so much assurance."

¹ *This is trifling.* Cario knew his master did not dare by law to take his chaplet from him; and thence he is emboldened to make this impudent answer.

² *Expert at concealing.* The commentators have puzzled on this place.—The greater part of them would have this spoken *by way of surprise*, on Cario, who, after his master had commended him as the most faithful, expecting he would go on praising him, was disappointed by his adding, after a pause, a word of a rascally signification; a method indeed usual enough among all the comic poets; but, in my opinion, the meaning of Aristophanes is much pleasanter. There is an ambiguity in the Greek word, which properly signifies *hiding, concealing, secreting*. I do not indeed agree with Giraldus, that this word is used in a good sense by the

'Thou knowest, that I a religious and upright man as I am, have had very ill success in the world——nay, have suffered extreme poverty.

Cario. Ay, Ay, I know it very well.

Chrem. Whilst others have acquired great riches, being at the same time guilty of sacrilege, public incendiaries,¹ informers, and villains of all kinds.

Cario. I am persuaded of it.

Chrem. I went therefore to consult Apollo, concluding

ancient Greek writers (for the scholiast says no more than that it signified *cunning* in the common conversation of the Greeks of his time, viz. above one thousand years after our poet.) The meaning, I apprehend, is this: I know thou art very capable of concealing my goods from me, why then not capable of concealing my secrets from others? This pleasantry is preserved in the translation.

¹ *Public incendiaries.* Mr. Theobald gives here *patriots*. Giraldus hath this note: "The Athenians, as well as other cities, had formerly their orators, who reminded the people on all occasions of their real interest; such were Aristides, Nicias, Miltiades, Pericles, and others, being men of great merit; against whom Aristophanes by no means inveighs, but against those, who, regarding only their own interest, and neglecting that of the public, harangued the populace on plausible, rather than useful, subjects. Demosthenes lashes those latter in the following words: 'Some of these from beggars are become rich: others from obscurity are ennobled. Some have erected private palaces more magnificent than the public edifices. Their wealth is increased in proportion to the diminution of the public treasure.'"

indeed the quiver¹ of my miserable days to be almost shot out, to inquire of him, for the sake of my son,² who

¹ *The quiver.* The metaphor here used is extremely beautiful, and we have ventured to preserve it; notwithstanding, Madam Dacier hath thought proper to drop it; and so hath her good friend, Mr. Theobald. This is a metaphor in frequent use among the Greek poets, particularly in the *Œdipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles, v. 1205. Horace hath likewise imitated it, Ode xvi. Book II.

Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa?

The note of Giraldus is so very ingenious, and so finely illustrates the beauty of this passage, that I cannot help translating it.

“Whilst men,” says he, “are in their vigor, one is ambitious of great honors; another applies himself to the acquiring riches; a third, with the utmost diligence, aspires to immense learning: but when once a man finds himself broken with old age, his mind desponds; nor hath he a greater incentive to these pursuits, than an archer hath to level his bow at a mark, when he sees his quiver empty of arrows. ’Tis observable, that the same word in Greek signifies both *life* and a *bow*. Dr. Bentley hath shot his arrow at this place, and, being a good marksman, hath hit the word ἐκτεροξεῦσθαι, and struck it out of the text. In the room of which he hath substituted ἐκτερολυπεῦσθαι, i. e. *spun out*; a reading to which we have no other objection than that it doth not come from Aristophanes.

² *For the sake of my son.* Ben Jonson, who hath founded two of his best plays on the passion of avarice, seems to have an eye to this; for he introduces every man pursuing riches,

is my only child, whether it was his interest to depart from his father's morals, and to become crafty, unjust, entirely corrupt ; for these seemed to me the necessary qualifications for this world.

Cario. What, from his garlands, chatter'd forth¹ the God?

Chrem. You shall hear. The god told me this plainly:² The first person whom I should meet after I departed from the temple, him he commanded me never to quit, till I had prevailed on him to accompany me to my house.

Cario. And pray who³ was the first person you met?

Chrem. Why, this very person here before us.

Cario. And can you be so dull to misapprehend the god's meaning, which declares to you in the plainest⁴

on the pretence of doing good to others, or the public, and disclaiming all selfish views; one wants to build hospitals, another for the propagation of religion, &c.

¹ *Chatter'd forth.* We have translated this into a blank verse; it is in the original in the tragic style, and an intended burlesque on Euripides for the affected use of this word upon the same occasion.

² *Plainly.* In opposition to his character of Loxias, or the oblique god, of which kind were most of his oracles, and to which *Cario* alludes in the first speech.

³ *And pray who.* Madam Dacier and her friend have mistaken the original here. They translate it, *And was this the first, &c.* The fault is indeed trivial, but lovers of accuracy will not be offended at the observation.

⁴ *The plainest.* This word which is here used in the superlative degree, seems to be retorted by *Cario* on his master, for the reason mentioned in our last note but one.

manner, that your son should pursue ¹ the manners of his country.

Chrem. Whence do you infer this?

Cario. Most certainly. A blind man may see into this oracle, that it is extremely advantageous to exercise all kind of corruption at this present season.

Chrem. The oracle can by no means lean to this; it tends to something more important. And if this fellow will but tell us, who he is, and for what purpose, or on what occasion, he is come hither with us, we may then understand what our oracle means.

Cario to Plutus. Come on; you, Sir, first and foremost, tell us who you are, or consequences ² will follow.

[*Laying his stick on Plutus's shoulder.*]

Chrem. It behoves you ³ to speak to him immediately.

¹ *That your son should pursue.* “Nothing can be smarter,” says Madam Dacier, “than this explanation of the oracle. Apollo had ordered Chremylus to carry home with him the first person he met: and, as there were then no others but caitiffs to be found, Cario draws this just consequence, that the god had ordered him to follow the torrent, and to educate his son in the manners then in vogue. The scholiasts,” says she, “have not well comprehended all the fineness of this passage.”

² *Or consequences.* This is the true meaning of the Greek, and agreeable to the best commentators. The French and the English translators have dropped the humor of the original without any reason.

³ *It behoves you.* Mr. Theobald hath addressed this speech to Cario erroneously.

SCENE II.

PLUTUS, CARIO, CHREMYLUS.

Plutus. I then desire much grief may attend thee.

Cario. Do you understand, Sir, whom he declares himself to be?

Chrem. It is to you, not me he speaks thus: for you questioned the gentleman in an awkward and rude manner. [*To Plutus*] But, Sir, if you delight in the behaviour of a gentleman,¹ declare yourself to me.

Plutus. I then declare, I wish much wailing may attend thee.

Cario. The gentleman, and the omen, Sir, are both your own.

Chrem. By Ceres, no joy² shall ever attend thee: for,

¹ *A gentleman.* The Greek is “a man, who hath regard to his oath.” In opposition to those scandalous fellows, who are afterwards lashed in this play, the informers and their witnesses. The Athenians, in common with the other Greeks, had so religious a regard to an oath, that perjury was the most base and infamous imputation, with which any character could be aspersed. *Εὖστροφος* is the *Honnête Homme* of the French, a *Gentleman*. M. Dacier translates it *Homme de bien*.

² *No joy, &c.* The compliment of salutation among the Greeks, was to give one another joy; but Plutus had wished grief and wailing only to attend Chremylus and Cario, to which Chremylus alludes in this speech.

if thou dost not unfold thyself, to a miserable end will I bring thee, thou miserable wretch.

Plutus. Good gentlemen, depart from me, I beseech you.

Chrem. No, by no means.

Cario. Odso! Master, I will tell you the best method¹ in the world to deal with him. I will put this fellow to the most execrable end imaginable: for, having led him up to the top of some precipice, there leaving him, away go I—that tumbling from thence, the gentleman——may break his neck.

Chrem. Away with him then immediately.

[*Cario lays hold on Plutus.*

Plutus. O by no means!

Chrem. Will you not tell then?

Plutus. Ay, but if you should know who I am, I am certain, you will still do me some mischief, and not dismiss me.

Chrem. Not we, by all the gods, if you will but——

Plutus. Take your hands off from me.

Cario. There, you are at your liberty.

Plutus. Hear me then: for, it seems I must discover

¹ *Master, I will tell you the best method.* Our translation is literal, and there is great humor in Cario's pretending to have found out some extraordinary method to make Plutus discover himself, and afterwards proposing to break his neck. Madam Dacier hath dropped this. Mr. Theobald hath introduced in its stead a facetiousness which I do not understand:—"I will make the devil go to wood with his reverence."

what I had so firmly resolved to conceal. Know then that I am PLUTUS.

Chrem. O thou most accursed of all mortals. What! Art thou Plutus, and would'st thou conceal thyself?

Cario. What! you, Plutus? in such a miserable pickle—O Phæbus, Apollo, and O ye Gods! and O ye Dæmons, and O Jupiter!—How say you? And art thou he indeed?

Plutus. Indeed.

Chrem. What! he himself.

Plutus. The very self-same he.

Chrem. Tell me then, whence comes it that thou art in this dirty condition?¹

Plutus. I come, Sir, from the house of one Patroclus,² who hath never been at the expense of washing himself, from his mother's womb.

¹ *This dirty condition.* Aristophanes here alludes to the dirtiness of Plutus's person, and not to his dress, as Madam Dacier hath in her translation, and her note on this place would understand it. This is plain from the reason which he himself presently assigns, viz. that he could get no water to wash himself; besides, the Greek word signifies properly drowth, dirt for want of washing.

² *Patroclus.* He was a very rich Athenian, and so sordid that he was frequently upbraided with it by his acquaintance; on which occasions he answered, that he "lived after the manner of the Lacedæmonians," whose plainness and temperance was proverbial in all Greece. The Greek words literally translated, are, "who never washed from the time of his birth." One of the commentators would have it, that the poet insinuates the dirt and nastiness of this fellow to be as it

Chrem. But pray tell me, how came you by this misfortune in your eyes?

Plutus. Jupiter, out of envy to mankind, afflicted me thus: for, when I was a little boy, I threatened, that I would only visit the just, and the wise, and the modest among them; whereupon he struck me with blindness, that I might not distinguish those from others. To such a degree doth this god envy good men!

Chrem. And yet it is by the good and just only that he is honored.

Plutus. I agree with you.

Chrem. Well, Sir, and if you should be restored to your sight, would you now avoid the habitations of the wicked?

Plutus. I do promise it.

Chrem. And you would frequent the just?

Plutus. Most certainly: for it is a long while since I have seen them.

Chrem. No wonder, truly: for neither have I, who have my eyes, seen any such lately.

Plutus. Well: now dismiss me; since you know every thing concerning me.

Chrem. No, by Jupiter, we will stick so much the closer to you.

Plutus. Did I not say you would be troublesome to me?

were innate. But probably he meant no more, than that he never allowed himself a bagnio; these were so universally used, and so extremely cheap at Athens, that a total abstinence of them must have indicated the last degree of avarice.

Chrem. Be prevailed on, I beseech you, and forsake me not: for, should you seek him never so diligently, you will not find an honest man. No, by Jupiter, will you not; for, indeed, there is no other¹ honest man besides myself.

Plutus. Ay, all of you say this: but when once you have possession of me, and are become rich, you throw off the mask, and grow rampant in iniquity.

Chrem. It is indeed too commonly so: yet all men are not villains.

Plutus. Yes, by Jove, every mother's son of you.

Cario [*aside.*] You shall roar⁴ aloud for this, Sir.

Chrem. That you may know then how many advantages you will enjoy under my roof, only lend me your attention, and I will make you sensible. I flatter myself, indeed, I flatter myself, (with the assistance of Heaven be it spoken) that I shall deliver you from this infirmity of your eyes, and restore you to perfect sight.

Plutus. Indeed you shall not: for I have no desire to see any more.

Cario. What doth the fellow say? This is a miserable dog in his own nature.

Plutus. Should Jupiter, who so well knows the follies of mankind, hear I had recovered my sight, he would pound me in a mortar.

¹ *For indeed there is no other.* This is truly comic, and displays a vanity in Chremylus, with which a good actor would not fail to charm an audience.

² *You shall roar, &c.* The offence which Cario, a rascally slave, takes at the universal satire of Plutus, is extremely pleasant.

Chrem. Doth he less to you now, who suffers you to stroll about stumbling in this manner?

Plutus. I know not what he may do: but I dread him exceedingly.

Chrem. Indeed, thou art the greatest coward of all deities. Do you think the power of Jupiter, and all his thunderbolts, would be of a triobolus¹ consequence to you, if you could once recover your sight, though it were for never so little time.

Plutus. O miserable wretch! utter not such things.

Chrem. Be under no concern: for I will demonstrate that your power is much greater than that of Jupiter.

Plutus. You demonstrate this of me!²

Chrem. Yes, by heavens! Instantly will I. By whose means doth Jupiter reign over the gods?

Cario. By the means of money: for he hath the most of it.

Chrem. Well, and who furnishes him with these means?

Cario. 'This honest gentleman here.

Chrem. And through whom do men sacrifice to Jupiter—Is it not through him there?

Cario. Ay, by Jupiter, for they pray aloud³ for riches.

¹ *Triobolus.* About a groat of our money. As the scene is in Athens, we thought proper not to export our own coin thither.

² *You demonstrate this of me.* 'The literal translation would be *Me, you!* a conciseness in that language inimitable in ours.

³ *Pray aloud.* Here seems to be a beauty in this passage, which hath escaped Madam Dacier, and consequently Mr.

Chrem. Most certainly he is the cause, and if he pleased, could easily put an end to their sacrifices.

Plutus. How so, pray?

Chrem. Because no man could offer an ox, nor even a barley-cake,¹ no, nor any other thing, without your good pleasure.

Plutus. How!

Chrem. How! Why he will not know how² to purchase any thing, unless you are present, and give him the money: so that if the power of Jupiter be offensive to you, you alone will be able to demolish it.

Plutus. How say you? Do men sacrifice to him through me?

Chrem. I do say so. And by Jupiter!³ if there is any

Theobald. The Greek word is *aloud, openly, in express terms*. Cario, I apprehend, means, that they are not ashamed openly to profess their putting up prayers for riches; whereas those, for revenge on their enemies, the death of their friends or parents, or such like, are offered up more privately and secretly. With this agrees the *Aperto vivere voto* of Persius.

¹ *An ox nor a barley-cake.* Madam Dacier and Mr. Theobald add a sheep, which I should not have mentioned, but for their remarkable agreement in this additional sacrifice.

² *How! Why, he would not know how.* In this instance, as many others, we have with great labor and care preserved the Greek ambiguity, which may give some pleasure to our learned readers.

³ *I do say so. And by Jupiter.* This is literal; Madam Dacier hath added, “and much more.” Mr. Theobald, “and I tell you further.”

thing splendid, or beautiful, or lovely,¹ among men, it proceeds from you ; for to money² all things pay obedience.

Cario. Even I myself, for a small piece of money, am become a slave : because I was not so rich³ as some people.

Chrem. They say too of the Corinthian courtesans,⁴ that, if a poor lover attacks them, they will not even lend him an ear : but when a rich lover presents himself before them, they will themselves present any thing to him.

¹ *Splendid, beautiful, or lovely.* Literal. M. Dacier, “ rien de beau & d'agréable ;” Mr. Theobald, “ nothing fine or agreeable.”

² *To money, &c.* This is verbatim. M. Dacier, “ Aujourd'hui les richesses font tout ;” Mr. Theobald, “ At this day riches alone perform all things.”

³ *Because I was not so rich.* This is truly in the character of Cario : he insinuates, the only difference between him and his master lies in their purses. I am surprised M. Dacier passed this by. What Mr. Theobald means by redeeming a slave bought in the market, I know not.

⁴ *The Corinthian courtesans.* There was, according to Strabo, at Corinth, a temple dedicated to Venus, in which were contained more than a thousand women, who were prostituted to all persons who would come up to their prices, which at last grew so exorbitant, that it became proverbial, “ Every man is not capable of going to Corinth.” There are many names of the more famous remembered ; but none equal to Laïs, whose story is well known. Perhaps there is something in this passage, which the commentators have not well understood ; but which we shall be excused from explaining.

Cario. They say that boys will present too: not for the sake of their lovers, but of money.

Chrem. You speak of prostitutes, not the worthier sort: for those never ask for money.

Cario. Why, what do these ask for?

Chrem. One will accept a fine horse, another a pack of hounds.

Cario. O then it is probable they are ashamed to ask for the money: they are pleased to cover their iniquity with the name of a present.

Chrem. All arts, all crafts¹ known amongst mankind, are invented through thee. One sits down, and cuts out

Madam Dacier hath shown great art in her translation of this place. Mr. Theobald hath thought proper to change the scene into Drury-Lane; facetiously enough, perhaps, if we allow him that liberty.

¹ *All arts, all crafts.* The curious reader may, perhaps, have some pleasure in seeing the trades in use among the Athenians: the judicious one, and who is well versed in human nature, will not fail to observe how ingeniously our poet hath blended all the means of acquiring riches together, whence we may conjecture that the fair traders of his days were not so honest as those of ours. As for Mr. Theobald, he hath here thought proper entirely to quit his author; we shall, therefore, at present, quit him. The conjecture of Madam Dacier, on the action in this place, is too pretty to be omitted. "There is," says she, "something more in this speech of Chremylus, than the translators and scholiast have perceived. Under pretence of running through the different trades and occupations of men, he points with his

leather ; another hammers out brass, a third hammers up wainscot, and a fourth casts the gold he hath received from thee. This filches away clothes from the public bagnio, another breaks open houses. One cleans cloth, another skins, another tans them ; one deals in onions : nay, through thee, that gallant, when surprised with another man's wife, is stripped¹ as naked as when he was born.

Plutus. Unhappy wretch that I am ! I never knew a syllable of all this before.

Chrem. to *Cario.* Doth not the mighty emperor of Persia owe all his splendor to this person ?

Cario. Are not all public assemblies² called together through him ?

Chrem. What ! dost not thou man our gallies ?³ answer me.

finger at certain persons among the spectators, whom he taxes with theft, and whom he accuses of being caught in adultery, and suffering a very severe penance for it."

¹ *Stripped.* The Greek here alludes to a particular punishment for this crime, which we could not literally translate into English.

² *Public assemblies.* Parliaments in Mr. Theobald ; it hath been disputed whether these were derived from the Saxons or Normans ; but Mr. Theobald hath now first shown that they came from the Athenians.

³ *Man our gallies.* In their naval wars their gallies were commanded by the rich, who were obliged at their own expense to man them.

Cario. Doth not he ¹ maintain the foreign troops in Corinth? ¹

Chrem. Will not Pamphilus ² owe many a groan to thee?

Cario. And will not Belonopoles ³ together with Pamphilus?

Chrem. Is it not through him that we support the F—ts of Argyrius? ⁴

¹ *Foreign troops in Corinth.* The Athenians were at this time engaged in alliance with the Corinthians and others, against the Lacedæmonians; they supplied their allies with money instead of men; for which they are likewise accused by Demosthenes.

² *Pamphilus.* He was a rich usurer at Athens, who had been in public office, and robbed the treasury; of which being convicted, his goods were confiscated; but the Greek verb is, as we have translated it, in the future tense; and it is a denunciation of a future judgment against him by the poet. It is more than probable that he might be detected, and under prosecution at the time of this Comedy. Madam Dacier therefore, and her English follower, have departed from the original, in speaking of the punishment of Pamphilus as of a thing already past.

³ *Belonopoles.* The agent or parasite of Pamphilus.

⁴ *Argyrius.* A rich Athenian, so insolent with his wealth, that he used to indulge himself in all indecencies, and particularly that here mentioned. This is a fine stroke on the Athenians for their mean submission to any insult in their rich men.

Cario. Ay, Sir, and is it not through him that we support the stories of Philepsius?¹

¹ *The stories of Philepsius.* The Greek is simply, "Doth not Philepsius, through thee, tell stories?" "Philepsius," says M. Dacier, "after having ruined himself by his debauches, was at last reduced to tell stories for his livelihood." Mr. Theobald hath rendered this note literally, and both in their translations have understood the original in this sense. The scholiast and the commentators all coincide with this interpretation. We have, however, ventured to give it another turn. Had Philepsius been able to get his livelihood in this extraordinary manner, he must have been excellent in his way, and a properer subject of panegyric than satire. Besides, such a beggarly instance would have been very improper to set forth the great power of Plutus, and very disagreeable to all the others; to omit the anticlimax between the example of Argyrius and this of Philepsius. The truth is, Suidas seems to be the ringleader of this mistake, who, from no other authority than that of this single line in Aristophanes, hath (*more suo*) given us a short history of this person, who is, he says, mentioned by Demosthenes in his Oration against Timocrates. Now the account given us by Demosthenes is, that he was a very considerable person, and imprisoned for his ill administration of the affairs of the republic. He mentions Argyrius in the same place, and gives a very different character of him from that given by the commentators and translators of our author. Aristophanes, therefore, means in this place, that people attended to the silly stories of this wealthy man, in order to get a supper, or some other reward; that they submitted to the impertinent and tiresome repetitions of Philepsius, for the same reason as to the insolence of Argyrius.

Chrem. Do we not through thee send auxiliaries to the Egyptians? ¹

A very pregnant satire, by which his stories are represented as worthless and noisome. This custom of treating their acquaintance with the repetition of their own works, so common in Athens and Rome, is bitterly inveighed against by many classic authors, particularly Horace, Juvenal, and Martial.

¹ *Auxiliaries to the Egyptians.* The Greek scholiast is very uncertain to what fact the poet alludes. He gives us our choice of four, not one of which was, as I apprehend, a true one. For as to Amasis, to omit that he lived too long before the time of this play, can we believe that Aristophanes would have thought their sending for corn in a time of dearth was any just cause of satire? The same objection lies against Psammitichus. The objection of antiquity holds good likewise against his third and fourth conjectures. Madam Dacier, and her literal translator Mr. Theobald, have, in their learned notes on this place, been misled into applying this satire to a transaction, which, as they say, happened 65 years before; a method very inconsistent with the freedom of our author. The truth is, as the learned Kuster hath given us from Palmerius, the person here inveighed against, "was Chabrias, who, at that time, without public authority, had been induced, by the greatness of the presents made him by Nectanebus king of the Egyptians, to strike up an alliance with that king, and to assist him against Artaxerxes; on which account, Artaxerxes having complained to the Athenians, Chabrias was recalled by a public decree." Cornelius Nepos tells us, that a certain day was prefixed for his return, which if he did not observe, they threatened to condemn him to death. On these

Cario. Is not Nais¹ through thee enamored of Philonides?²

Chrem. Nay, the tower of Timotheus.³——

threats, he returned to Athens, but staid there no longer than was necessary; “for his splendid living, and the liberties in which he indulged himself, were regarded with an evil eye, and created him the envy of his fellow-citizens.” This, therefore, was a very popular subject for Aristophanes to fall upon, and his satire must have been received with the greatest applause by the audience. Chabrias was archon seven years before this play was acted.

¹ *Nais.* The original is *Lais*, which the translators have all preserved; but the true reading is *Nais*, who was likewise a courtesan of Corinth, and whose age very well agrees with the time of this play. And this Mr. Petit recommends from Athenæus. The famous *Lais* was at this time no more than fourteen years old; and tho’ it is probable she was early enough in her iniquity, we can hardly suppose her to have been then so famous a harlot, that her fame at Athens could be public enough to be used as the most eminent example of her profession. Mr. Bayle agrees with Athenæus, and supposes this *Nais* to have been the courtesan with whom Euripides had his conversation.

² *Philonides.* He was an ugly and ignorant fellow, but wealthy, and the subject of much invective. Phyllius says of him, alluding to his gigantic size, that his mother was a camel. Theopompus will have him to have been born of an ass. It was likewise proverbially said, that such a one was more ignorant than Philonides.

³ *The tower of Timotheus.* Timotheus was an Athenian general, who, from his extraordinary successes, became so

Cario. O may it fall¹ on thy head.

Chrem. Are not all matters, in short, transacted through thee? For thou art the whole and sole author of all things, whether evil or good—Assure yourself, Sir, you are.

Cario. This I am sure of—that in all battles they obtain the victory, into whose scale this gentleman throws himself.

much the object of envy, that he was exposed by the painters in a sleeping posture, with fortune standing by him, and driving cities into his net. Timotheus, with true greatness of mind, eluded their malevolence, by saying, If I take such cities in my sleep, what do ye think I can do when I am awake? He built a tower of a stupendous height, which he boasted he had raised without the assistance of fortune; an affront which that Deity so highly resented, that whereas she had been formerly represented to have held frequent conversations with him in person, she entirely forsook him, and never appeared to him more. By this allegory perhaps we may understand, that he impoverished himself by the vast expenses laid out on this work; the vanity of which is probably here objected to him by the poet.

¹ *May it fall.* This freedom of Cario with his master must be accounted for from the chaplet, which we before remarked to have been his protection. Madam Dacier's conjecture on this interruption by the slave, is very ingenious. Perhaps, says she, this tower was the prison in which the Athenian slaves were confined, when they had committed any roguish actions, and deserved chastisement; which contributed not a little to the pleasantry of this passage.

Plutus. What I! who am but one; can I effect such mighty matters?

Chrem. Can you! Ay, by Jupiter, and many more too: for no man ever had his fill of thee; of all other things we may be surfeited:¹ even with love.

Cario. With bread.

Chrem. With poetry.²

Cario. With sweetmeats.³

Chrem. With honor.

Cario. With cheese-cakes.

¹ *Surfeited.* The Greek is “sated.” Madam Dacier, “lassé;” Mr. Theobald, “weary.”

² *Poetry.* M. Dacier speaks, I apprehend, too generally, where she says, that the Greeks, by the word *Μουσικῆς*, mean *the liberal arts*. The ancients opposed the *Artes Musicæ*, or *Canoræ*, to the *Artes Mutæ*. In the first, they included music, oratory, poetry, &c. In the latter, grammar, geometry, and other sciences. And this appears clearly by Socrates, in Plato’s *Phædon*, Sect. 4. Indeed the word is sometimes used in a more general sense, and *Ἀμουσος* signifies commonly *illiterate*; but the purer and more confined sense is only to the *Artes Canoræ*; and these must be meant here; for the sentiment is not otherwise just, since no man can be surfeited with learning, as Mr. Theobald hath rendered the *Belles Lettres* of Dacier.

³ *Sweetmeats.* What was brought to the table at the end of the entertainment; the Greek scholiast calls it the desert. The old woman, in the fourth act of this play, says, she sent her lover a cake and other sweetmeats. M. Dacier, “*Confitures*;” Mr. Theobald, “*Sugar-plums*.” By which we may observe, how much the palate of these translators agrees.

Chrem. With bravery.

Cario. With figs.

Chrem. With glory.

Cario. With hasty-pudding.¹

Chrem. With the command of armies.

Cario. With pease-porridge.²

Chrem. Whereas of thee none ever had his fill: For when any one hath acquired thirteen talents, he becomes the more desirous of acquiring sixteen; and when he hath compassed these, he then desires forty; and if he fails in his last wish, he complains he hath none of the comforts of life.

Plutus. You seem to me to speak very well; I apprehend only one thing.

¹ *Hasty-pudding.* A dish, saith Erasmus, composed of wheat-flower, in so great request, that it gave occasion to a proverb, whereby they reproached any one with dainty living. M. Dacier, "Bouillie;" Mr. Theobald, "Boiled beef."

² *Pease-porridge.* The Greek is "boiled lentils," or "lentil broth." Mr. Theobald, "Stewed cabbage." The scholiast remarks that contrast which the poet hath here introduced between the tastes of the master and slave; for while the one contemplates love, honor, &c. the slave hath no regard but to his belly. This is obvious to a very indifferent reader; but there is here a more latent beauty, and which still more humorously exposes the grossness of the latter; for whereas Chremylus rises in a regular climax from love and poetry to military glory, the highest honor among the Greeks, the slave, in as direct an anticlimax, comes from bread, sweet-meats, cheese-cakes, &c. down to pease-porridge, the greatest of dainties in his opinion.

Chrem. Tell me what.

Plutus. How I shall be able to retain the possession¹ of this power, which you represent me to have.

Chrem. By Jove, you need not fear it: but indeed, all men agree that thou art a most timorous animal.²

Plutus. Not in the least. This is no more than the scandal of a housebreaker, who, when he had stolen into a house, and found every thing so cautiously locked up, that he was able to carry off no booty; he, forsooth, called my prudence timidity.

Chrem. However, be under no concern now: for, if

¹ *Retain the possession.* In the Greek, “to become master, proprietor of.” M. Dacier, “Je crains fort de n’avoir jamais ce pouvoir;” Mr. Theobald, “I strongly suspect I shall never have this power.” But Plutus had agreed with them before that he had it; his fear therefore was how to retain it; and this is agreeable to the Greek phrase, and to all that follows.

² *Timorous animal.* The word is here in the neuter gender, as being more contemptuous; so Virgil:

—————“Varium et mutabile semper
Fœmina”—————

Which Mr. Dryden observes, is the severest reflexion which hath been ever made on the fair-sex. M. Dacier says, the scholiast reports this verse from a comic poet; but indeed the comic poet, mentioned by the scholiast, is Euripides, and the verse mentioned is in the *Phœnissæ*, but not a word of the paleness of gold. I am rather apt to understand this allegorically of the timidity of rich men, who are under eternal fears of designs against themselves and their money; and this allegory is extremely just and beautiful, which is well supported in the answer of Plutus.

you will but heartily enter into my proposals, I will undertake to make you more quick-sighted than Lynceus¹ himself.

Plutus. But how will you be able to effect this, being but a mortal?

Chrem. I have very good hopes from what Apollo himself, shaking his Pythian laurel,² communicated to me.

Plutus. Is he then privy to this?

Chrem. He is, I assure you.

Plutus. Be very cautious.

Chrem. Good Sir, give yourself no trouble about it: for, be assured, tho' at the expense of my life, I will accomplish it.

Cario. And I promise you too, if you desire it.

¹ *Than Lynceus.* M. Dacier, "a Lynx;" Mr. Theobald, "an Eagle." This Lynceus was a famous discoverer of mines in the earth, which gave occasion to the poets to feign, that his eyes could penetrate into its bowels, and see what was doing in the lower world.

² *Shaking his Pythian laurel.* The shaking the laurel denoted the presence of the God; according to Callimachus, in his hymn to Apollo, and Virgil.

———"tremere omnia visa repenti

Liminaque laurusque Dei."

ÆN. 3. ver. 90.

There is something very humorous in the endeavour of Chremylus to persuade Plutus that Apollo, who presided over physic, had communicated to him the method of curing his blindness, and no less pleasantry in the concern Plutus (from his fear of Jupiter, which hath been mentioned before) expresses lest Apollo should be in the secret.

Chrem. And many others will assist us, who are so honest, that they now want bread.

Plutus. Alas! you promise me very sorry assistants.

Chrem. Not at all, provided you change their circumstances,¹ and make them rich: but, *Cario*, do thou run away with the utmost expedition.

Cario. You will please to tell me what I am to do.

Chrem. Call hither my brother-farmers—you will find them, probably, in the fields sweating at their hard labor—bid them come hither, that every one may have his share in this *Plutus*.

Cario. Well, I am going: but let some of your family within take care of this beef-steak² here.

Chrem. That shall be my care—But away, fly instantly³—And now, *Plutus*, thou most excellent of all deities, be pleased to go in with me; for this is the house, which

¹ *Provided you change their circumstances.* We have taken here a little liberty with the original, in order to give our reader some idea, which I think is not easy to gather from the other translations of this speech.

² *Beef-steak.* The Greek word is a diminutive, and signifies literally a little bit of flesh, and is spoken contemptuously by *Cario*. This was a piece of the sacrifice, which the ancients used to bring home to those who did not assist at it.

³ *Away, fly instantly.* The use of the participle *ἀνύσας* is not to be rendered exactly in any other language. The literal translation here would be, “run, having dispatched it.” It may be expressed in Latin by *jamdudum curre*, which is more emphatical than Frischlin’s *curre celeriter*. *M. Dacier, cours et fais ce que je t’ai dit.* *Mr. Theobald,* “run and do as I have ordered you.”

you must this day fill with riches, by all methods whatsoever.¹

Plutus. Oh! Sir, I swear to you, I never enter another man's house without the utmost concern; for I have never been dealt well with² in any. If I enter the house

¹ *By all methods.* The literal translation is, "justly and unjustly." In our translation we have followed Suidas, who tells us, that the words are not to be taken rigorously, and that they signify no more than "by every method." M. Dacier says, Chremylus doth not speak there according to his real sentiments; for this would not agree with the probity of which he makes profession; but he uses these terms as the common formulary of prayers, which men addressed to Plutus. "This," says she, "is more beautiful than it appears at first sight." Giraldus likewise thinks this expression foreign to the character of Chremylus, and solves it as we have done from Suidas. To say the truth, I think there is more beauty, than even M. Dacier herself apprehends, in this passage. There is infinitely more humor in suspecting the veracity of Chremylus in his former declaration, than here. But admitting that he had hitherto preserved an honest character, there is nothing more natural than his abandoning it at this near and sudden approach of riches: to which we may add, that it is on his first being left alone with Plutus, and in the rapture of his devotion to him, that he throws off the mask, and expresses his unbridled eagerness to come at wealth "by all methods whatsoever."

² *I have never been dealt well with.* For the poor, who become rich all at once, are almost sure to fall either into excessive prodigality, or into an extreme avarice. Dacier. Nothing can be more just and fine than this allegory.

of a miser, he instantly buries me deep under ground; and if a worthy friend comes to ask him for a little piece of money, he denies me stoutly, says that he never saw me: but, if I visit a mad-headed fellow, I am exposed to whores and dice, and in a moment turned naked out of doors.

Chrem. But you have never lighted on a moderate man before: ¹ for my part, this was ever my way. I rejoice in frugality more than any man alive; and so I do in expense, whenever it is necessary to be expensive. But let us go in: for I am desirous that you should see my wife, and my only son, whom I love dearer than any thing—I mean, after you.

Plutus. I verily believe you.

Chrem. For why should any man tell a falsehood to you?

¹ *But you have, &c.* This whole speech is admirable, and agreeable to the character of Chremylus, in which there is a mixture of hypocrisy and drollery. The conclusion, in which this just and good man professes to love his wife and child in subordination to the affection he bears for Plutus (or for wealth) is a stroke of Nature which every ordinary reader cannot take. Had such a sentiment dropped from one of a contrary disposition, there would be no humor in it; for true humor arises from the contention and opposition of the passions. Thus it is the fond, jealous and Italian husband, who, in Johnson's play of the Fox, sacrifices his wife and his honor to his avarice. The behaviour of Chremylus here is an instance of that insight into nature, which alone constitutes the true comic poet, and of which numberless examples appear in this our author.

ACT II. SCENE I.

SCENE, *the open country.**Cario, Chorus.*

Cario. O Yes! All you that live upon grass-sallets,¹ as well as my master, my good friends, and countrymen, and lovers of hard work; come, hasten, hurry, the time admits no delay; it is, indeed, the very nick of time,² when your assistance is required.

Chorus. You perceive we have been long bustling towards you with all our might, making the best haste in the power of feeble old men: but you would have me run as fast as yourself——besides, first tell me on what account your master hath sent for us.

Cario. I have been telling you a long time: but you don't hear me. My master then says, that he will deliver you from that cold and comfortless life you now lead, and make you all live pleasantly.

Chorus. What is all this? Whence doth this fellow talk in such a manner?

¹ *Grass-sallets.* The Greek word is *θύμον*, "Wild thyme." M. Dacier translates it "onion;" which Pliny denies. The sense requires it should be some poor and vile diet, whereas onions were in much greater repute among the Greeks; for Homer sets two of his heroes to breakfast upon them. The scholiast calls it a worthless plant.

² *Nick of time.* In Greek, "the point;" alluding to the picture of *Occasio* on the point of a razor.

Cario. Why, my good pains-taking men, he hath brought home with him a certain old gentleman, who is all dirty, crooked, wretched, wrinkled, bald, toothless—— Nay, and by Jupiter, I believe he is circumcised into the bargain.

Chor. O golden news!¹ How say you! pray tell me,

¹ *O golden news.* M. Dacier hath understood the passage as if the chorus of peasants had concluded from the description given by *Cario* in his last speech, that the old man so brought home must have been immensely rich. Her words are, “By the description which you have made of this man, I find that he has heaps of gold; for,” says she, in her notes, “he would say that no one would entertain such a sorry guest, if he was not extremely rich.” This translation and note Mr. Theobald hath thought proper to embrace. I own there is something pretty enough in this conceit; but I question whether it ever entered into the head of Aristophanes. Our translation is literal, and will not, I apprehend, convey any such idea to the reader. We must suppose, from many things in this scene, that *Cario* had, before the opening it, given them hints of his master’s good-fortune. Doth he not say, in the third speech of this scene, I have been telling you a long time?—and doth not the Chorus presently afterwards threaten him for imposing on them? which surely they could not have accused him of from the description of this miserable old man, whose riches they could not, without the gift of conjuring, have foretold, from what *Cario*’s words import. Giraldus, who well knew that the Greek would not admit of the construction which M. Dacier hath put on it, and not attending perhaps to that method, in use among the dramatic poets, of carrying on part of the business behind the scenes, which

for you are proving he hath brought home a whole heap of Money.

Cario. I think I prove that he hath brought home a heap of the infirmities of old-age.¹

Chor. And do you expect to escape in a whole skin, after imposing on us thus, whilst I have this cudgel in my hand?

Cario. You think then that I am a person naturally given to such tricks ; and nothing but what is stark naught, I warrant you, can come from my mouth.

Chor. Observe the gravity of this hang-dog. Sirrah, your shins cry out aloud for the stocks and fetters.

Cario. Your lot is to distribute justice in the other world ; yet you will not set out, tho' Charon hath delivered you your staff.²

Horace alludes to in his *Intus digna geri*, hath advanced the most ridiculous solution imaginable. Whence, says he, did the Chorus know this old fellow, who was in so miserable a condition, to have a heap of riches ? Why, he conjectured it from no other reason, than because Cario said he was an old man ; for it is the genius of old men not only to keep what they have, but to increase it more and more, &c. The exclamation, "golden news," is spoken ironically. We shall only add, that this line is alluded to by Julian the emperor, in an epistle to S. Basil.

¹ *A heap of the infirmities.* This is literal from the Greek ; and there is great humor in the repetition of the word, which M. Dacier hath dropped, and, after her, Mr. Theobald. This word in the original, which properly signifies a heap of corn, is very pertinently put into the mouth of these rustics.

² *Your lot, &c.* This passage is by no means of itself

Chor. Burst thy guts for an impudent rascal as thou art, and a cheat in grain, that hast thus imposed on us—

intelligible to a mere English reader. As the learned Archbishop Potter, in his excellent discourse of the civil government of Athens, chap. xx. hath fully explained the custom here alluded to, we shall give his account at large in his own words: "The judges were chosen out of the citizens, without distinction of quality; the very meanest being by Solon admitted to give their voices in the popular assembly, and to determine causes, provided they were arrived at the age of thirty years, and had never been convicted of any notorious crime."

"The courts of justice were ten, besides that in Areopagus; four had cognizance in causes concerning blood; the remaining six of civil matters. These ten courts were all painted with colors, from which names were given them; and, on each of them, was engraven one of the ten following letters, A. B. Γ. Δ. E. Z. H. Θ. I. K. Whence they are likewise called, *Alpha*, *Beta*, &c. Such therefore of the Athenians, as were at leisure to hear and determine causes, delivered in their names, together with the name of their father and borough inscribed upon a tablet, to the Thesmothetæ, who returned it to them with another tablet, whereon was inscribed the letter of one of the courts, as the lot had directed. These tablets they carried to the crier of the several courts signified by the letters, who thereupon gave to every man a tablet inscribed with his own name, and the name of the court which fell to his lot, and a staff or sceptre. Having received these, they were all admitted to sit in the court." M. Dacier hath, from Giraldus, differed a little from this account; for, instead of ten courts, she hath made but one, beside the Areopagus, and called it the court

and hast had the assurance not yet to tell us on what account thy master sent thee to call us from our work, and made us hasten hither when we had so little leisure, and pass by many good herbs, without gathering any.

Cario. Well, I will conceal the matter no longer ;¹ Plutus, then, my good people, is the person my master hath brought home ; Plutus, who will make us rich.²

Chor. Indeed ! and is it possible that we shall all become rich ?

of ten. She would have, likewise, not different courts, but the precedency of the judges in the same court to be decided by lot ; which would destroy the beauty of the allusion here. The sense of this passage, which I suspect none of the translators nor commentators have rightly *smelled out*, is this :—Whereas one of the old fellows shook his staff at Cario, and also threatened him with a judicial punishment ; he answers pleasantly, I see, Sir, you have the staff of authority in your hand, but instead of being destined by your lot to judge in one of our courts of justice, your lot destines you a court of justice in the next world ; and Charon is the crier who delivered you that staff.

¹ *I will conceal no longer.* Though Cario, as we have said before, had given them a hint of his master's riches ; yet he had neither acquainted them with the manner of his acquiring his wealth, nor that the advantage would extend to his neighbors.

² *Make us rich.* Some copies read, “ make you rich,” less agreeably to the character of this slave, who is always with great forwardness thrusting himself in as a person of consequence on every occasion.

Cario. Ay, by the Gods, shall ye, all be Midas's,¹ if you can but each procure a pair of Ass's ears.

Chor. How I am delighted! How I am transported, and ready to dance for joy²—if all this is really true.

Cario. And I myself will dance like the Cyclops,³

¹ *All be Midas's.* So is the Greek. M. Dacier, "Vous allez tous être (*Riches*) autant de Midas—vous en avez déjà les oreilles:" Mr. Theobald, "You shall all be rich as Midas, and have his ass's ears to boot." In both of which the excellent humor of the original is lost.

² *Ready to dance for joy.* This is verbatim. Mr. Theobald, "I could dance till I kick the moon almost."

³ *Will dance like the Cyclops.* Madam Dacier has so well explained this passage, that our reader will be very well satisfied to see her entire note on the occasion:—"One of the old men having said, that he would dance *de toute sa force* [which words, by the way, are not in the original] *Cario* lays hold on this occasion, and says, that he will act the Cyclops, put himself at the head of his company, and lead them, as the Cyclops led his rams and his oxen. This Cyclops is Polyphemus, whose history we have in Homer's *Odyssey*. The passage is very lively and beautiful; but it will appear more so to those who know, that Aristophanes is here burlesquing a tragedy of Philoxenus, out of which he introduces whole speeches. This Philoxenus fell in love with a mistress of Dionysius, the Sicilian tyrant. They say farther, that he was so well received by her, as to create a jealousy in the tyrant, who, not understanding raillery, caused the poet to be seized and sent to the quarries. Happily for him, he found means to escape, he retreated to the island of Cerigo, and produced a play, which he intitled, 'The Cyclops, or the loves of Philoxenus and

Tantararara ¹—and capering thus with my feet, I will lead up myself. Come on, my boys, at every turn bawl and bleat forth the songs of sheep and stinking goats—Come, follow me, and dance as wantonly as ye can, with all the qualifications ² of a goat.

Chor. We'll follow thee bleating, Mr. Tantararara

Galatea.' This was a very lucky subject; for, as on the one side, Galatea was the name of the Cyclops' mistress, so was it likewise the name of Dionysius's. On the other part, Dionysius himself was not unlike this giant, in his enormous stature, in his great cruelty, and in the ugly cast of his eyes. Lastly, as Polyphemus crushed his rival Acis under the great rocks, which he threw on him, in the same manner this tyrant had buried Philoxenus alive in his quarries. Though this play was far from being bad, it, nevertheless, fell under the lash of Aristophanes, from the ridiculous representation of the Cyclops with a sack and a guitar."

¹ *Tantararara.* In the original *Threttanelo*, which word the Greek scholiast tells us, without either reason or authority, "resembled the sound of the guitar when played upon." Madam Dacier hath accordingly translated it, "*Jouer de la GUITARRE.*" Mr. Theobald, "dance to the music of my own GUITAR." Whereas the Greek mentions nothing of this instrument, nor can we suppose Cario had any such in his hand. The word hath in no language any meaning, and was, like that which we have rendered it, and many others in songs in our own language, used only as a vehicle for the music.

² *With all the qualifications.* Our reader is at liberty here to guess what these are: we cannot, with decency, render the Greek more literally. M. Dacier and Mr. Theobald have modestly omitted it.

Cyclops; and when we have caught thee, thou hungry cur, with thy satchel full of wild pot-herbs,¹ staggering before thy flock;² or, perhaps, when thou art snoring under some hedge, then, sirrah, we will take a swinging staff, and, burning it at one end, blind thee.

Cario. I will in all things imitate the Circe,³ who mixed up those drugs, which formerly persuaded the

¹ *With thy satchel full of wild pot-herbs.* “This is also taken from Philoxenus’ tragedy, where the Cyclops carried a bag full of herbs, which he had provided. And Aristophanes condemns this very justly: for probability should always be preserved, especially in characters. And herbs were by no means proper diet for a Cyclops, who used to eat up two or three men at a breakfast.” Dacier. Though Homer, in his *Odyssey*, says of the Cyclops, “that they plant not with their hands, nor do they plough: but they feed on what the earth produces without seed, and without the plough.”

² *Staggering before thy flock.* He supposes that *Cario* would be drunk, alluding to *Polyphemus*, into whose cave *Ulysses* having entered, in order to avoid his cruelty (for he had seen several of his companions cut in pieces, and devoured by *Polyphemus*) invited him to drink a cup of wine sweet as honey, and divine, and so strong, that it required twenty times as much water to mix with it. *Polyphemus* getting drunk with it, and falling into a sound sleep, was deprived of his sight by *Ulysses*.

³ *I will imitate the Circe.* As the old fellows had said, that they would imitate *Ulysses* and his companions in the punishment they inflicted on *Polyphemus*, *Cario* quits that character, and says, that he will personate that of *Circe*, who changed *Ulysses*’s companions into swine.

retinue of Philonides¹ at Corinth, as if they were really swine, to eat well-kneaded dung, which she herself

¹ *Persuaded the retinue of Philonides.* Circe was a famous courtesan of Circei. Ulysses coming on that shore, sent Eurylochus with twenty-two men to reconnoitre the country; they arrived at the palace of this lady, who, by the attraction of her charms, made them forget their companions, whom they had left in the ship. Eurylochus alone returned to inform Ulysses of what had happened. Homer has dressed up this matter of fact in a very ingenious fable; in which he says, that Circe transformed these men into swine. Aristophanes alludes to this fable, but changes it; for, instead of saying the companions of Ulysses, or Eurylochus, he says the companions of Philonides; and, instead of laying the scene at Circei, as Homer has done, he lays it at Corinth; by that means giving a terrible stroke to that same Philonides, whom we have mentioned before, reproaching him, that Laïs (Nais) the Corinthian courtesan had entirely bewitched him; and that, with a set of parasites, whom he always had about him, he led an infamous life in her company. This requires no greater explanation, nor can any satire be more ingenious or more bitter. Dacier.

Mr. Pope, in his notes on the tenth book of the Odyssey, differs from this learned lady in her account of this fable. "Homer," says he, "was very well acquainted with the story of Medea, and applies what is reported of that enchantress to Circe, and gives the name of *Ææa* to the island of Circe, in resemblance to *Ææa*, a city of Colchis, the country of Medea and *Æetes*. That Homer was not a stranger to the story of Medea is evident; for he mentions the ship *Argo* in the twelfth Odyssey, in which Jason sailed to Colchis, where Medea fell in love with him; so that, though Circe be a

kneaded for them; and do you, my little pigs, grunting with delight, follow me, your dam.¹

Chor. Well then, and we, in our merry mood, will take thee,² Madam The Circe, mixing up those drugs, enchanting and defiling that retinue, and hang thee up by thy virility; and anoint thy nostrils³ with thy kneaded dung, till they have the savor of a he-goat; and thou, like gaping Aristyllus,⁴ shalt say—Pigs, follow your dam.

Cario. But, come—now a truce with jesting. Do you

fabled deity, yet what Homer says of her was applicable to the character of another person; and, consequently, a just foundation for a story in poetry.”

The observation of Giraldus is likewise worth mentioning. The poet says, he makes this courtesan worse than Circe; for she changed the minds and internal disposition of her followers, whereas Circe, as Homer expressly remarks, metamorphosed only their outward form.

¹ *Little pigs, follow your dam.* This was a proverb, and, as Erasmus tells us, used to denote a great degree of ignorance and stupidity; for the sow was opposed to Minerva.

² *And we will take thee, &c.* Aristophanes here alludes to the punishment inflicted by Ulysses on Melanthius, in the 22nd Odyssey.

³ *Anoint thy nostrils.* This place is entirely misunderstood by the scholiast. The allusion is, indeed, none of the cleanliest, but may be easily guessed at, by those who have observed the misfortunes, which sometimes happen to the noses of rams and he-goats, when they make love.

⁴ *Aristyllus.* This Aristyllus was a poet, who added to many other vices that of obscenity; for which reason Aristophanes gives him here this nasty entertainment. When he

return to your former shapes.¹ As for my part,² I will steal some bread and meat from my master, and employ the remainder of my leisure in eating; and, when I have filled my belly, will set my hands to the work we are upon.

SCENE II.

CHREMYLUS, CHORUS.

Chrem. To bid you barely welcome, my countrymen, is an old and fusty salutation.³ I say, I receive you with

spoke, he screwed up his mouth, either through affectation, or natural impediment, and rather snorted out his words through his nose: so that, says Erasmus, he imitated the sound of a pig. There can be nothing, therefore, more apposite and severe than this satire. Our poet mentions this Aristyllus again in his "*Ecclesiazousai*," v. 643. where Praxagoras objects to Blepyrus:

Prax. Ay, but there is a much greater misfortune than this.

Blep. What can that be?

Prax. If Aristyllus should kiss you, and call you his father?

Blep. He should roar for it if he did, &c.

¹ *To your former shapes.* This must be referred to those transformations into goats and hogs, which Cario humorously supposed to have actually happened.

² *As for my part.* Cario leaves the Chorus, and goes in to his master, to acquaint him with their arrival. He, securing Plutus in his house, comes forth to meet them.

³ *Is an old and fusty salutation.* The remark of Madam Dacier here is so very ingenious, that our readers will be

open arms, since you hasten to me with so much alacrity, and in such good order.¹ Now persevere, and lend me your assistance, that we may be the preservers² of this God.

Chor. Courage ! Imagine you have in me a very Mars before your eyes. It would be a shame indeed, that we, who all of us wrangle so stoutly in our assemblies for a

pleased to see it entire. Aristophanes touches on a folly common to all ages. For those who make their own fortune, and arrive at estates and honors, which they could not hope for from the meanness of their birth, are eager all at once to change their former manners, and imitate the fashions and manners of the polite world. So Chremylus, the moment he has got Plutus in his house, finds the word *Χαίρειν*, the ordinary term of salutation, to be too obsolete and vulgar. He will now, therefore, say nothing less than *ἀσπάζομαι*, which signifies "I kiss your hands, or I embrace you ;" which was a phrase peculiar to the Beau Monde, and used only among the great.

¹ *In good order.* This was, probably, spoken ironically, to ridicule the extreme hurry and confusion in which these old fellows advanced to see Plutus.

² *The preservers.* None of the translators and commentators have at all understood this passage. The title of *Σωτήρ* was ascribed to the Deity. The Athenians had dedicated a temple to Jupiter by that title, which they attributed also to Apollo, Bacchus, Æsculapius, and Hercules ; and the feminine of it to Juno, Minerva, Venus, and Diana. Cicero, in his oration against Verres, observes, that the word *Σωτήρ* is so emphatical, that it cannot be adequately translated into the Latin language : and this remark he makes, the more effectually to exaggerate the arrogance of Verres, in assuming to him-

Triobolus,¹ should tamely suffer any one to carry off Plutus from us.

Chrem. Odso! I see Blepsidemus too coming this way: it is plain, by the haste he is in, he hath heard something of this business.

SCENE III.

-BLEPSIDEMUS, CHREMYLUS.

Blepsid. What can I make of this? Whence, and by what means, hath Chremylus got all these riches on a sudden? I will not believe it; and yet, by Hercules, it is

self that sacred appellation. From this hint, therefore, our sagacious readers will admire the beauty of this passage. M. Dacier, "M'aidez à garder Plutus;" Mr. Theobald, "Give me your succour in the guarding Plutus." Where, by the bye, as the former is no translation of the Greek; so the latter is a translation neither of the Greek nor the French. The occasion of this mistake in the Latin and French translators, was probably that the Chorus, in their answer, take no notice of the jest of Chremylus; who intimated, that, by restoring his eyes, they should be the preservers of the God, and so be to a God what Gods ought to be to mortals.

¹ *Triobolus.* This was the reward of their judges from the time of Cleon, who increased it from two Oboli to three. The greediness of the Athenians for these offices, for the sake of this small fee, is inveighed against in no less than three places in this play, and again in his "Frogs," in his "Birds," in his "Wasps," and in almost every one of the rest.

the public discourse of all the barbers' shops,¹ that he is grown rich in an instant: but to me it is a prodigy, that a man, who hath any good luck, should send for his friends to share it. Surely, he hath done a very unfashionable thing.

Chrem. By the gods, I will tell him the truth, concealing nothing: O Blepsidemus, our circumstances are finely altered since yesterday; for you are at liberty to share my good fortune, since you are one of my friends!

Blepsid. And are you indeed become rich, as the report goes?

Chrem. I shall be so very suddenly,—if our God pleases:² for there is yet—there is some hazard in the matter.

Blepsid. What hazard?

Chrem. Why, there is——

¹ *Barbers' shops.* These were the coffee-houses of the ancients. Theophrastus calls them *ᾠνα συμπόσια*, i. e. wineless computations. They were assemblies of all idle gossiping fellows, who there assembled to vent their malignity against their betters. The barbers themselves were likewise the most talkative and impertinent of all people. On this occasion we will tell a little story out of Plutarch's treatise of "Talkativeness." "There happened once in a barber's shop a discourse about Dionysius; in which it being asserted by one of the company, that his government was settled and firm as a rock, the barber answered with a smile;—'Can we affirm this of Dionysius, at whose throat I every day hold this razor?' These words being carried to Dionysius, he ordered the poor barber to be crucified."

² *If our God pleases.* This is very pleasant; he acknowledges no other God than Plutus. Dacier.

Blepsid. Tell me instantly, what is it?

Chrem. If we are successful, we are made for ever. If we miscarry, we are utterly ruined.

Blepsid. This concern¹ of yours looks ill on your side, and is far from pleasing me; for, to grow extremely rich all on a sudden, and at the same time to be so full of apprehensions, betokens a man who hath committed some heinous crime.²

Chrem. How! some heinous crime!

Blepsid. If you have stolen³ something from Delphos, whence you are just arrived, either gold or silver belonging to the god, and you now repent of it——

¹ *This concern.* The Greek word signifies “a burden;” but here it is to be taken metaphorically. Our translation is almost verbal; M. Dacier, “Voilà des circonstances qui ne me plaisent nullement;” Mr. Theobald, “These are circumstances, which in no ways please me.”—This translation doth in no ways please me.

² *Heinous crime.* The Greek is οὐδὲν ὑγιές, which is often used by our author, to signify “the extremest degree of turpitude;” in which sense it occurs in Plato’s “Phædon.” M. Dacier, “Sent fort quelque méchante action;” Mr. Theobald, “Smells strong of some dishonest action.”

³ *If you have stolen.* Blepsidemus is interrupted in his speech by Chremylus, who loses all patience at the suspicion. He was probably proceeding to advise him, if he repented, to make restitution of what he had stolen. Ours is the true and literal rendering of the Greek. M. Dacier, “Mon Dieu! vous avez derobé, &c.” Mr. Theobald, “My God! you may perhaps have stolen something, &c.”

Chrem. O Apollo, the averter——Not I indeed.¹

Blepsid. Leave trifling, good old gentleman, I know very well——

Chrem. Do you suspect such a thing of me?

Blepsid. I know—that there is no man truly honest;² we are none of us above the influence of gain.

Chrem. By Ceres,³ you seem to me to be out of your senses.

Blepsid. [*aside.*] How different is this poor man's behaviour from what it was!

Chrem. By heavens, friend, you are out of your mind.

¹ *Not I indeed.* M. Dacier, “Je n'en ai jamais eu la pensée;” Mr. Theobald, “I never had a thought of that nature.”

² *That there is no man truly honest.* This passage hath been hitherto entirely misunderstood.—This speech is to be connected with the former of Blepsidemus. The meaning of it is this: “Dont trifle with me, by pretending to honesty; for I know very well that there is no man truly honest, &c.” He was interrupted by Chremylus; for which he throws in that particle of impatience $\Phi\epsilon\tilde{\upsilon}$, i. e. Pooh! Pshaw! and then proceeds to deliver his opinion; upon which Chremylus conjectures he is out of his senses. M. Dacier hath erred here with the rest, and mistranslated the Greek, and Mr. Theobald hath very strictly translated her.

³ *By Ceres.* It is strange, none of the commentators should remark the propriety of this oath. Ceres was supposed by the ancients to be one of those Deities, who deprived men of their senses. So Horace, *Cerritus*; “a distracted man, a man under the wrath of Ceres.”

Blepsid. [*aside.*] How his eyes wander!¹ — the certain indication of a man who hath committed some knavish prank.

Chrem. I know what you are croaking² to yourself. You think I have stolen something, and want to share in the booty.

Blepsid. I want to share! In what, pray?

Chrem. But this is no such thing — it is an affair of quite another nature.

Blepsid. O! then you have not stolen, you have taken it away by violence.

Chrem. The man is possessed.

Blepsid. What, not even cheated any one?

Chrem. Not I, truly.³

Blepsid. O Hercules, which way can a man turn himself in this affair: for I see you will not discover a word of truth.

Chrem. You accuse me, before you have informed yourself of the nature of my case.

¹ *How his eyes wander.* The Greek literally rendered is, “neither do his eyes keep one place.” The behaviour of Blepsidemus, on the generous communication of wealth by his friend Chremylus, first in thinking him a rogue, and that he intends, instead of conferring a benefit on him, to draw him into a scrape; and afterwards, in concluding him a madman, is, I am sorry to say it, as fine and just a picture of human nature as ever was drawn.

² *Croaking.* Literal from the Greek. M. Dacier, “Je vois bien pourquoi vous dites toutes ces sotises;” Mr. Theobald, “I know what you drive at by this foolery.”

³ *Not I truly.* Literal. M. Dacier, “non assurément, jamais;” Mr. Theobald, “most certainly, never.”

Blepsid. Harkee, friend ; I will make this matter up for you very cheap, before the town knows any thing of it. A small matter of money will stop the orators' mouths.¹

Chrem. By Jupiter, you appear a very good friend indeed ; I suppose you will lay out three minæ,² and then charge me twelve.

¹ *Stop the orators' mouths.* M. Dacier's note here is worth transcribing. " This is extremely severe ; Aristophanes would insinuate by it, that all the orators at Athens were corruptible. And he has regard to what happened to Demosthenes : he had pleaded one day against the Milesians, and the cause was adjourned to the next morning. The ambassadors found him in the intervening night, and, to oblige him not to speak against them, they gave him the full sum he demanded. The next morning Demosthenes appeared at the bar, with his neck wrapped up with wool and linen, and pretended that he was very much disordered with the quinsey, which obstructed his breath ; but it was well known that this quinsey was nothing more than the gold which he had received. On which a wit said, that it was not the *Συνάγχη ἀλλ' ἀργυρέαγχη*, which is a pun untranslatable, and signifies that his breath was stopped, not with the quinsey, but with money." Mr. Theobald hath literally translated this note. The story is a true and pleasant one, and is related by Plutarch, in his life of this orator ; but there is a beauty in this passage, which neither M. Dacier nor her translator have observed ; and this is, that Aristophanes hath here shown himself to be a true prophet as well as a satirist ; for Demosthenes was not born when this play was writ.

² *Three Minæ.* M. Dacier hath here transferred the scene to France ; Mr. Theobald to England ; but they have both

Blepsid. Methinks, I see a certain person standing at the bar, with his petition in his hand, and his wife and children by him, extremely resembling the picture of the *Heraclidæ*,¹ as it was drawn by Pamphilus.

Chrem. I a suppliant! No, thou sot:² but henceforward none but the good and worthy, and modest part of mankind, shall be enriched by me.

made another mistake, by not preserving the proportion between the sums. A Mina answered to the sum of three guineas; so that the first sum answers to nine, the latter to thirty-six.

¹ *The Heraclidæ.* After the death of Hercules, Eurystheus persecuted his descendants so fiercely, that they were obliged to fly to the protection of the Athenians. They went therefore into the senate with all the marks of suppliants, having Alcmena at their head. Chærephon made a tragedy of this subject, and Pamphilus a picture, which was hung up in their picture-gallery. There is nothing pleasanter than this comparison, which Blepsidemus draws between the posture of Chremylus begging mercy with his wife and son, and the posture of Alcmena and her children, imploring the protection of the Athenians. Dacier. To this we may add, that the poet could use no more ingenious artifice to ingratiate himself with his audience, than by alluding to a story, which reflected so much honor on the Athenians, and of which they were so vain.

² *No, thou sot, &c.* The Greek scholiast explains this place very ingeniously, by reducing the answer of Chremylus into the following argument: "If I had committed sacrilege, as you say, I should be a wicked man; and, if a wicked man, I should not give any thing to another: but now, by choosing

Blepsid. How say you! What, have you stolen such a prodigious sum?

Chrem. O villany! Thou wilt ruin¹—

Blepsid. You will ruin yourself, or I'm mistaken.

Chrem. Not I: for I have Plutus in my possession, you wretch!

Blepsid. You Plutus! What Plutus?²

Chrem. Plutus, the god of riches.

Blepsid. And where is he?

Chrem. Within.

Blepsid. Where?

Chrem. Here, in my house.

Blepsid. In your house!

Chrem. Even so.

to bestow riches on the good, it is plain I am a good man; and if so, it is plain I can have committed no sacrilege."

¹ *Thou wilt ruin.* This is strictly literal. Chremylus is interrupted by Blepsidemus, imagining he was going to say, "You will ruin yourself and your family by this treatment of me, which will be the occasion that I shall give you nothing;" or something of this kind, which was natural for him to suspect, from the drift of his last speech. M. Dacier hath translated, or rather altered it into, "Vous me faites mourir avec vos soupçons;" Mr. Theobald, "You distract me with these calumnies."

² *Plutus! What Plutus?* There is a double meaning in the Greek impossible to be preserved, the same word signifying riches, and the god of riches. We have therefore been obliged to deviate from the original in the next line, and give it a new turn.

Blepsid. Go hang yourself¹ — Plutus at your house !

Chrem. Yes, by the gods, is he.

Blepsid. And do you really tell truth ?

Chrem. I do.

Blepsid. Do you, by Vesta ?

Chrem. Yes, and by Neptune too.

Blepsid. What Neptune?² do you mean the god of the sea ?

Chrem. Ay, and t'other Neptune too, if there be any other.

Blepsid. What, keep Plutus to yourself,³ and not send him over⁴ to us your friends !

¹ *Go hang yourself.* In the Greek, go to the ravens ; that is, to be hanged on a gibbet, where thou wilt be devoured by those birds ; a curse frequent among the Greeks, and several times used by our author. The same is mentioned by Solomon in the Proverbs. So Horace :

“ ——— non pasces in cruce corvos.”

Zenodotus gives a different account of this, and says, that there was a place in Thessaly named *Kόζαρες*, into which villains were thrown headlong.

² *What Neptune.* M. Dacier observes, that this was a joke on the Athenians, for worshipping Neptune under different names, as the Sea Neptune, the Horseman Neptune, &c. Indeed our poet omits no occasion of taking the most particular freedoms with the deities of his time ; and one would scarce imagine he wrote in the same age when the divine Socrates suffered death for Atheism.

³ *What, keep Plutus to yourself.* We have added this for the sake of our reader, the better to connect it with what preceded.

⁴ *And not send him over, &c.* Literal. M. Dacier, “ Et

Chrem. Matters are not yet ripe enough for that.

Blepsid. What, not to communicate him to any one!

Chrem. No, by Jupiter — we must first —

Blepsid. What must we?

Chrem. Restore him to his sight.

Blepsid. Restore whom! tell me.

Chrem. Plutus; and by some means or other,¹ make him see as well as ever.

Blepsid. Is Plutus then really blind?

Chrem. Ay, by Jove is he.

Blepsid. O! then it is no wonder he never came near my house.

Chrem. But, by the blessing of the gods, he will come now.

Blepsid. Would it not be proper then to call in the assistance of some physician?²

Chrem. Pray, what physician can there be in this city: for, as there are here no fees for physicians, there is, consequently, no such art.³

vous ne m'envoyez pas chercher;" Mr. Theobald, "And had not you sent to me?" This is neither the letter nor spirit of the original.

¹ *By some means or other.* This is the true rendering of ἐν ᾧ γὰρ τῷ τρόπῳ; τῷ here is put for τῷ. This is the same as ἀμωσγέπως, a word used by our author, Thesm. 436. and well known to those who are conversant in the Attic writers. M. Dacier hath, for I know not what reason, dropped this; Mr. Theobald, I suppose, from complacence to that lady.

² *Physician.* Mr. Theobald hath confined this to oculists, by which the generality of the satire is restrained to that one branch.

³ *There is consequently no such art.* This is a twofold

Blepsid. Let us see, however.

Chrem. But I tell you there is none.

Blepsid. Nay, I believe so too.

Chrem. By Jupiter, the best way is to lay him in the temple of Æsculapius, as I myself before intended.

Blepsid. You say true. Be not dilatory: but do something or other¹ immediately.

stroke both against the avarice of the physicians, and against the avarice of the Athenians. M. Dacier hath added here, “Où leur art est si méprisé;” Mr. Theobald in complacence, “in a town that contemns the science.” In her note on this place, that lady says, that in the time of Aristophanes physicians “were neither esteemed nor paid.” This little agrees with what the learned baron Spanheim writes on this subject: “There is at this day extant amongst the works of Hippocrates, a decree of the Athenians, in which it is ordered, that he should be initiated into the great mysteries, presented with a golden crown, and be maintained in the Prytaneum, for having removed the plague from that city, and for writing his books in the medicinal art. We are told by Hyginus, that slaves and women were by law forbidden to learn it, &c. So that it appears, physic was reckoned by the Athenians among the more noble arts, and worthy to be professed by gentlemen.” And here I may add, that as Hippocrates was but fifty years older than our author, this satire, in M. Dacier’s sense, is the more incredible. No stage, except the French, hath taken more liberties with the faculty than our own; yet God forbid that any man who is sick, if he hath a guinea in his pocket, should conclude hence that we have no physicians in this populous city.

¹ *Do something or other.* “Εν γὰρ τι. M. Dacier, &c. have dropped this expression again, as a little before.

Chrem. I am going.

Blepsid. Well, make haste.

Chrem. I think of nothing else.

SCENE IV.

POVERTY, CHREMYLUS, BLEPSIDEMUS.

Poverty. O ye wretches,¹ possessed with the devil, who dare attempt this bold, wicked, and lawless action—whither, whither do you fly? will you not stop?

Chrem. O Hercules!

Poverty. Be assured I will absolutely destroy you, ye wicked wretches, who have dared conceive such an insufferable and audacious attempt; an attempt, which no one, at any time, either god or man, hath ventured on: wherefore you may both conclude yourselves² already destroyed.

Chrem. Who, pray, are you with your terrible pale countenance?

Blepsid. Perhaps, she is a tragical fury³ belonging to the play-house: for she hath a wild and tragical aspect.

¹ *O ye wretches.* “Poverty, having learned that the old men were endeavouring to restore Plutus his eyes, attempts to prevent them. This is very ingenious, and well conducted.”
Dacier.

² *Conclude yourselves.* This manner of considering future events as already past, is peculiar to the Greek and Oriental tongues.

³ *A tragical fury.* Aristophanes here rallies the absurd methods, which the tragic poets of his time took to inspire terror, or rather horror, into their audience. He particularly

Chrem. Ay, but she hath no torch¹ in her hand.

Blepsid. If she be no fury, she shall howl² for this behaviour.

Poverty. Whom, pray, do you imagine me to be?

Chrem. Why, some paltry hostess,³ or oyster-wench;⁴ for else you would not have scolded at us in this manner, without receiving any affront.

Poverty. Indeed! Why, have you not done me the greatest injury in the world, who have endeavoured to expel me out of this whole country.

points here at Æschylus, who introduced these dreadful deities into many of his Plays, and chiefly in his *Eumenides*, where they made so frightful an appearance, that it terrified many women into fits, miscarriages, &c. The dreadful apprehensions which the ancients had of these infernal divinities, gave great advantage to the poets: our own, for want of those, are obliged to have recourse to the poor assistance of thunder and lightning, and now and then a ghost; which last hath seldom appeared of late years on our stage, without more reason to be afraid of the audience, than they of him.

¹ *No torch.* This was as necessary an ornament to the tragical furies of the ancients, as a lighted taper is to the tragical ghosts of the moderns.

² *She shall howl.* The Greek is simply, "She shall weep then." M. Dacier, "Il faut done lui donner mille coups;" Mr. Theobald, "God so! she deserves to be whipt at the cart's arse, for forgetting that part of her furniture."

³ *Hostess.* The Greek word, by its origination, signifies one that entertains all guests; whence, in Lycophron, the masculine of this word is applied to hell; ἄδης πανδοχεύς.

⁴ *Oyster-Wench.* In the Greek an "Egg-seller."

Chrem. Not out of the whole country; there is still the Barathrum¹ left open to you. — But seriously, you had best tell us this very instant who you are?

Poverty. I am one, who will this day punish you both, for having endeavoured to exterminate me hence.

Blepsid. Oho! is not this she, who keeps the Hedge-Tavern in our neighbourhood, who is constantly ruining me with her bad half-pints.

Poverty. I am Poverty then, who have dwelt with you both these many years.

Blepsid. O King Apollo, and ye gods, whither may one fly?²

¹ *Barathrum.* We could not adequately translate this word. "It was," says the learned Archbishop Potter, "a deep pit belonging to the tribe Hippothoontis at Athens, into which condemned persons were cast headlong; a dark, noisome hole, and had sharp spikes at the top, that no man might escape out; others at the bottom, to pierce and torment such as were cast in." Madam Dacier has translated it, "the river," and Mr. Theobald, "hell;" imagining, I suppose, that the French lady meant the river Styx.

² *Whither may one fly.* There are few scenes in any play, either ancient or modern, which contain more exquisite humor than this. Those descriptions by which the figure and dress of this character of Poverty are as visible to the reader as they could be made to the spectator, are instances of quick invention and great art. The dreadful apprehension which Blepsidemus here expresses of poverty, the moment she declares herself, if well represented by a skilful actor, would delight a very indifferent and cold spectator: nor can the reason why Chremylus expresses so much greater boldness

Chrem. What are you doing? What a cowardly animal art thou!—Why don't you stand your ground!

Blepsid. Not by any means.

Chrem. How! not stay! shall we two men fly from one woman?

Blepsid. But she is Poverty, thou miserable man, than which a more pernicious creature¹ was never produced.

Chrem. Stand firmly: I beseech thee, stand.

Blepsid. By Jove, but I wont.

Chrem. Why, I tell you, we shall be guilty of the absurdest of all actions in the world, if we should run away, and leave the god destitute, for fear of this woman here, without daring to contend with her.

Blepsid. In what arms, or what strength shall we confide: for, is there a breast-plate, or even a shield, which this old hag doth not carry to pawn?²

escape the most ordinary reader, who will only reflect that he hath Plutus in his house.

¹ *Pernicious creature.* “Theognis, a very moral poet, had said before Aristophanes, that, to avoid poverty, a man should throw himself into the sea, or precipitate himself from a rock.”—*Dacier.* I cannot help adding, that this old man had shown no consternation when he apprehended he was in company with one of the furies, who is now so shocked at the presence of Poverty; a circumstance which, if well attended to, as greatly heightens the pleasantry of this scene, as any which the wit of man can invent.

² *Doth not carry to pawn.* So is the Greek, in which, as the scholiast observes, there is a remarkable elegance; for the verb is in the present tense, to indicate that poor people

Chrem. Courage! This god alone¹ (I am confident) will triumph over all the tricks of this woman.

are constantly pawning their goods. M. Dacier hath rendered it, "Ne nous a-t-elle pas fait engager?" Mr. Theobald, "Hath she not forced us to pawn?" This is a departure from the letter, from the allegory, and from the humor of the original; Chremylus is here drolling on Poverty, who had before said she had lived with them many years; and he gives this as an instance of the service she had done them. The learned reader will observe the force of the word *ἀσπίς*, the *Shield*. Which as it was most scandalous for any Greek or Roman to be without, so we may suppose it was the last piece of furniture, and that she had before stripped the house of all the rest. M. Dacier hath a note on this place, which, as Mr. Theobald literally translates it, I shall give in his words: "They had a law at Athens, which forbade all sorts of people to pawn their arms; but they did not scruple to violate this prohibition; and it is on this account that Aristophanes reproaches them."—*Dacier. Theobald.* The only author, which I can find, of this law, is the Scholiast on this very line; and even he says no more, than that it "seems to have been forbidden." Our learned Archbishop, in the second volume of his *Grecian Antiquities*, p. 85. says, "That to pawn their arms was an indelible disgrace, and scarce ever to be atoned for." But that it was forbidden at Athens by a law, I much question, there being, as I remember, no authority for it; and the text here seems rather to imply the negative.

¹ *This god alone.* The Greek is very emphatical, and seems to intimate that this is the only god who could get the better of her.

Poverty. Do you presume to mutter, you refuse of mankind,¹ when you have been caught in this detestable undertaking, caught in the very fact.

Blepsid. Why dost thou, while the rod hangs over thee,² attack us with thy reproaches, when thou hast not suffered the least injury?

Poverty. How! in the name of the Gods, do you think you have done me no injury, in endeavouring to restore the eyes of Plutus?

Chrem. What injury do we do you in this, whilst we are doing so much good to all mankind?

Poverty. What great good are you contriving?

Chrem. What good! First, having expelled you out of Greece³——

Poverty. Expelled me! and, pray, what greater mischief can you imagine yourselves able to bring on mankind?

Chrem. What?——why, by delaying to expel you.

Poverty. But I am willing, first, to give you a satis-

¹ *Refuse of mankind.* “In Greek *κατάραστα*, i. e. Rascals, who deserve to be sacrificed as persons loaded with the iniquities of all the people, and who ought to be sacrificed to appease the anger of the gods.” Dacier.

² *While the rod, &c.* The Greek is simply, “that art about to perish miserably.”

³ *First, having expelled you out of Greece.* So is the Greek. Chremylus was proceeding, but is interrupted by Poverty. M. Dacier, “C’est premièrement que nous te chasserons de toute la Grèce;” Mr. Theobald, “why, first and foremost, that we shall send you out of all Greece.”

factory account of this matter: and if I demonstrate, that I am the only cause of all the good which happens to you; and it is through me alone you live——Nay, if I dont,¹ then do to me whatever is agreeable to your pleasure.

Chrem. And have you the boldness, you hag, to say this?

Poverty. Nay, be you undeceived: for I shall easily demonstrate you to be utterly mistaken, when you say that you will make honest men rich.

Blepsid. O for some instruments of torture² for thee!

¹ *Through me alone you live—Nay if I dont.* Here we are to suppose the impatience of Chremylus was going to interrupt her, which will make this passage more familiar to an English reader, and will agree with the custom of our own theatres; not but this form of omitting the Apodosis, or second part of the sentence, is to be met with frequently in the best writers, not only in the Greek, but also in the Oriental languages. Thus Achilles, Hom. Il. i. 135. says, “If the Greeks will give an equivalent agreeable to my mind—but if they will not give me one.” See Eustachius on the place. Daniel iii. 15. “Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made.”—Here the apodosis is omitted; and therefore our translators have interpolated the word *well*. The same may be observed, Luke xiii. 8. 9. “Let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it: and if it bear fruit, well:” (which last word is not in the original) “And if not, then after that, thou shalt cut it down, &c.”

² *Instruments of torture.* In the Greek, *tympana et*

Poverty. You ought not to make this outcry and uproar before you know any thing of the matter.

Blepsid. Who can forbear roaring out, when he hears all this ?

Poverty. Every man of sense can forbear it.

Chrem. But, if you are cast, what penalty ¹ will you be bound to undergo ?

Poverty. Whatever you please.

Blepsid. Now you talk to the purpose.

Poverty. For if you are cast, you must submit to the same terms. ²

cyphones. The first of which were wooden cudgels, with which malefactors were beaten to death, being hanged upon a pole ; and the latter were collars usually made of wood, which constrained the criminal to bow down his head. Potter's Antiquities.

¹ *What penalty.* “ It was a custom among those, who had any cause depending in a court of justice, that he who was cast, beside the principal which was the subject of the suit, should pay, moreover, certain damages to the successful party, which was called *ἐπιγράφειν τήμημα*, which are the words here used by Aristophanes. This was adding to the principal sum in dispute an arbitrary satisfaction for the benefit of him who carried the cause. The Greeks took this custom from the Orientals, and gave it to the Romans.” Dacier.

² *For, if you are cast, &c.* This speech is to be connected to the former, and we have translated it almost literally. M. Dacier, “ Mais il est juste aussi que si vous perdez vous payez la même amende que je vous aurois païé, si j'avois perdu.” Mr. Theobald, “ But then it is but equity on the other hand, that

Blepsid. I suppose twenty hangings : will be sufficient.

Chrem. Ay, for her : but one a-piece will suffice for us.

Poverty. This you shall surely suffer, or find some very substantial reply to my allegations.

SCENE V.²

Chorus, Chremylus, Blepsidemus, and Poverty.

Chor. It now behoves you to say something very specious on your side; if you will get the better of this antagonist, it will require your utmost abilities.

Chrem. First then, I am persuaded this is universally acknowledged, that good men are justly entitled to prosperity; and as certainly, that the base and wicked³

if you lose the day, you shall make me the same satisfaction which you would have imposed if I had been worsted."

¹ *Twenty hangings.* There is something very humorous, as M. Dacier remarks, in this desire of killing poverty twenty times over, as if a single death was not sufficient security to them.

² *Scene 5.* The sentiments in this scene are inimitable, though the air of it is something graver than the rest of the play. Here, according to Horace, "*Vocem Comœdia tollit.*" The sweetness of the numbers cannot be preserved in any modern language.

³ *Wicked.* The Greek is Ἀθεός, which M. Dacier hath translated "Athées;" Mr. Theobald, "Atheists;" and Giraldus imagines that this word, in the sense these translators understand it, was introduced by Aristophanes to reflect on Socrates. But indeed the Greeks use this word most com-

should suffer a contrary fate. We, therefore, having considered this, have, with great difficulty, found out the means to effect an expedient in itself excellent, generous, and most effectual to this purpose: for, if Plutus should be now restored to his sight, instead of strolling blindly about the world, he will then go to the habitations of the good, and never again forsake them: at the same time he will fly the dwellings of the wicked. And thus he will, in the end, make all men good,¹ rich and religious. And now, who can invent an expedient more useful to mankind than this?

Blepsid. No one, surely. I will attest all you say, dont ask her confirmation.²

Chrem. For, as human affairs are now circumstanced, monly to signify a man who, on account of his crimes, was forsaken and deserted by the Gods; in which sense I remember it is frequently used by Sophocles.

¹ *And thus in the end will make all men good.* For when Plutus visits only good men, the whole world would become virtuous out of desire of riches. The generality of mankind seldom love virtue on her own account; they then only seek her, when she rewards their pursuit.

² *Do not ask her confirmation.* M. Dacier, “ Ne l'interrogez pas d'avantage;” Mr. Theobald, “ We need question the matter no farther.” “ This,” says M. Dacier, “ is very pleasant; Blepsidemus is afraid that Poverty will answer and overthrow all which Chremylus hath said; therefore he takes it up, and gives his judgment, and would have the whole dispute ended, as if it was already but too much decided.” I am surprised that the lady, who says this is a beauty, should drop it in her translation.

who would not rather call the whole phrenzy, and raving madness! For, how many villains flourish in riches, notwithstanding the injustice with which they have accumulated them; and how many of the best of men are in the utmost distress, nay, even starve, and are obliged to spend most of their time in thy company. (*To Poverty.*) There is a way, ' therefore, I say, to stop this mischief; and, if we put Plutus with his eyes open into it, he will effect the greatest advantages for mankind.

Poverty. You two old dotards, joint companions in folly and madness; you, who of all men are the most easily persuaded to quit the road of sound reason. Should this which you long for, be accomplished, I say, it would not be conducive to your happiness: for, should Plutus recover his sight, and distribute his favors equally, no man would trouble himself with the theory of any art, nor with the exercise of any craft; and if these two should once disappear, who afterwards will become a brasier, a shipwright,² a taylor, a wheelwright, a shoemaker, a brick-maker, a dyer, or a skinner? Or who will plough up the bowels of the earth, in order to reap³ the

¹ *There is a way.* The learned will observe with what difficulty we have here preserved the very phrase of the original, which no other translator hath endeavoured.

² *Shipwright.* "Poverty here runs over the most necessary trades to the support of human life, and includes the shipwright; for as Athens was a very sterile country, she could not subsist without commerce." Dacier.

³ *In order to reap.* This is the sense of the original. Literally it would stand thus; "Who would reap the fruits of

fruits of Ceres, if it was once possible for you to live with the neglect of all these things.

Chrem. Ridiculous trifler ! our slaves will with their labor perform for us all you have enumerated.

Poverty. But whence will you have any slaves ?

Chrem. We will purchase them with money, to be sure.

Poverty. But who will be the seller, when he himself is in no want of money ?

Chrem. O ! some Thessalian merchant,¹ or other,

Ceres, having first broken up the earth with ploughs ?” The ploughing and previous toil of the husbandman is always insisted on by those poets who describe the laborious and painful art of husbandry, not the more joyful employment of gathering the ripe corn into the garner. Ovid, in describing the golden age, doth not say they enjoyed the fruits of the earth without gathering them, but without ploughing and sowing :

“ Ipsa quoque immunis rastroque intacta, nec ullis

Saucia vomeribus, per se dabat omnia tellus.”

M. Dacier gives, “ Qui labourera la terre ? Qui fera la maison ?” Mr. Theobald, “ Who will till your earth, or lay your harvest into the barn ?” However, the French lady hath thought proper to understand the passage with us in her note, and gives the character of sublime to this verse in the original.

¹ *Thessalian merchant.* The Thessalians had formerly a very scandalous character. Demosthenes, in his first Olynthian oration, says of them, “ That they are perfidious by nature, and had behaved so to all mankind.” They were infamous likewise on many other accounts, but especially in this merchandise of slaves ; for they not only stole the slaves of other nations, but sometimes even kidnapped freemen, and

amongst those numerous slave-mongers, will be induced by the lust of gain.

Poverty. But, according to your scheme, there will, in the first place, be no such slave-monger : for what rich man would run the hazard of life in such traffic ? You yourself, therefore, will be obliged to plough and to dig, and to undergo all other laborious tasks ; so that you will pass your time much worse than at present.

Chrem. May this evil fall on your own head.

Poverty. No more shall you sleep on downy beds, or repose on carpets : ¹ for none such will be ; since no man with his pockets full of money will be a weaver. Nor shall you be perfumed with liquid sweets, not even on your wedding-day ; nor adorn yourselves with sumptuous embroidery. What then will avail your riches, when you will be able to purchase none of these things with them : for, as for the necessaries ² of life, these will be copiously supplied you by me : for I it is, who standing by the handicraft, compel him, like a mistress, through poverty, and the want of necessaries, to labor for his sustenance.

Chrem. With what good canst thou supply mankind,

sold them into remote countries. To this the poet particularly alludes in the next speech, where he says, “ No one would run the hazard of his life in such traffic.” Nothing can be more just or poignant than this satire.

¹ *Beds or carpets.* In the eastern countries beds were used only in the winter, and carpets in the summer.

² *As for the necessaries.* This is a most noble sentiment, and the diction in the original altogether as sublime.

except blisters on the legs¹ from the public bagnio-fires, and the cries of half-starved children and old women! together with an army of lice, gnats, and fleas,² (too numerous to be mustered) which humming round our heads, torment us, awakening us, and saying, *rise, or starve*. Moreover, instead of clothes we shall have rags; instead of a bed of down we shall have one of rushes full of bugs, which will awaken us out of the soundest sleep; instead of a carpet we shall have a rotten mat; and instead of a pillow, we shall prop our heads with a stone. As to our food, we shall exchange bread for mallow-branches, and furmety for the leaves of radishes. Our seats will not be chairs, but the head of a broken jar; and

¹ *Blisters on the legs*. In the winter, the poor used to get round the fire-places which heated the public bagnios; and as they wore no stockings, these spots on their legs, which they contracted from the scorching of the fire, were visible to all. This was a scandalous mark of extreme and abject poverty, and is again mentioned in this play.

² *With an army of lice, &c.* M. Dacier hath dropped the greater part of this speech as too indelicate for her language, and perhaps it would not agree with the nice ears of an English audience, who are apter to consider what is spoken, than what is suitable to the character that speaks. But surely our poet hath not injudiciously chosen the lowest and vilest of things, to expose the inconveniences and miseries of poverty. As therefore we conceive, the more sensible of our unlearned readers will be pleased to see the particular customs of the Athenians, as well of the poorer sort as the richer; we have here endeavored, as nearly as possible, to preserve the original.

lastly, we shall be even compelled to use one side of a broken crutch, instead of a kneading-trough.—Well, madam, do not I demonstrate that you are the author of many blessings to mankind?

Poverty. You have not been describing my life:¹ but canting forth the life of beggars.

Chrem. Well: and we commonly say, that poverty is the sister of beggary.

Poverty. Very well you may, who make no distinction between the tyrant Dionysius and the patriot Thrasybulus.²

¹ *My life.* So is the Greek. M. Dacier and Mr. Theobald have dropped the allegory, and consequently the humor of Chremylus's answer.

² *No distinction between the tyrant Dionysius and the patriot Thrasybulus.* It is impossible to imagine a more severe satire on the Athenians than this. "It implies," says M. Dacier, "that they made no distinction between virtue and vice." Thrasybulus was an Athenian, a patriot in the truest sense, and the greatest defender of the democratic power. He had delivered his country from slavery, by the expulsion of the Thirty Tyrants: whereas Dionysius, on the contrary, had totally subverted the liberties of the Syracusans, and erected an absolute dominion, which he exercised with the utmost cruelty. The confounding, therefore, these two together, and holding them both in an equal light, must be an instance of the greatest depravity in any people. But there is a beauty in this passage, so obvious, that I am surprised even the dullest commentator should pass it by. Poverty, in the person of Dionysius, characterises Plutus, whose tyranny over mankind, subduing their consciences, passions and affections, to his absolute will, is finely represented by such an arbitrary

But I never suffered any of these calamities; nor, by Jupiter, am I in any danger of them. The life of a beggar, which you mention, is indeed exposed to every want: but the state of poverty is only confined to frugality and business; and neither wants, nor abounds.

Chrem. O Ceres! what a blessed life you have described. If after all his parsimony and labor, he shall not leave enough¹ to bury him.

Poverty. You aim at banter and raillery, and are unwilling to be serious; not knowing that I make better men, both in body and mind, than Plutus; for about him²

prince: whereas Poverty likens herself to the patriot, under whose administration all men may enjoy safety and freedom with a competency; and, by adhering to whom, they are delivered from that slavery, which enormous wealth exacts from its possessors.

¹ *Shall not leave enough.* M. Dacier and Mr. Theobald say, that he shall leave enough. This is a departure from the Greek, and only lessens the strength of the original. I shall add, that our Poet seems here to have had his eye on Aristides, who had such a great contempt for wealth, that when he died, not leaving enough to bury him, his funeral expenses were defrayed by the public; and Ælian tells us, that those who had espoused his daughters, after his death, rejected the marriage, on account of his extreme poverty: and this happened within the memory of Aristophanes.

² *About him.* Here M. Dacier and Mr. Theobald again drop the allegory, and say, that Plutus gives men the gout, &c. A reader of any taste will easily see the difference; which is far more easy to conceive than to express.

are the gouty, and the tun-bellied, and the dropsy-legged, and men choaked with their own fat ; but in my train are only the slender, the active,¹ and the most terrible to their enemies.

Chrem. Very probably ! for by starving them you make them slender enough.

Poverty. Well then, I proceed now to the purity of men's manners, and I shall convince you, that good manners dwell² entirely with me; for all abuse belongs to riches.

Chrem. O certainly ! for to steal, and to break open houses, is, no doubt, a very mannerly thing.

¹ *The active.* Literally the " waspish," referring as well to their dispositions as to their shapes.

² *Good manners dwell.* The deficiency and corruption of our language, by the confusion introduced into it from our applying improper and inconsistent ideas to words, of which Mr. Locke so justly complains, makes it exceeding difficult to render adequately so copious and exact a language as the Greek ; especially in what regards their philosophy and morals. The Greek word here is *Κοσμιότης*, which properly signifies the good order of the mind, and in that sense it is used in Plato. For the Greek philosophers considered a mind distracted with passions, and polluted with vices, to be in a maimed and distorted condition. Hence *Κοσμιότης* is used more at large, to signify the behaviour arising from such a disposition of mind. When we translate this " good manners," we must be understood in the true and genuine, and not the corrupted use of the word. M. Dacier, " L' honnêteté & la moderation, l'orgueil et l'insolence ;" Mr. Theobald, " moderation and honesty, insolence and injustice." Whence we observe how much easier it is to translate French than Greek.

Blepsid. Yes, by Jove: it must be certainly very reputable, if the thief be obliged to conceal himself. ¹

¹ *If the thief be obliged to conceal himself.* “Blepsidemus says this in raillery; but Aristophanes, in many places, seems desirous to insinuate, that the Athenians imitated, in some instances, the customs of the Lacedæmonians, and that amongst them theft passed for gallantry, and as a jest, provided the thief was not taken in the fact.” Dacier. Theobald. Perhaps other nations differ from these, in requiring that the theft, in order to be reputable, should be considerable as well as secret. But I am sorry, notwithstanding the ingenuity of the above note, we cannot agree with this learned lady and gentleman in their translation of the passage, to which the note relates. Ours is strictly literal, and the meaning, if it wants explanation, is, that it must be a very reputable thing indeed, which a man is obliged to hide himself for having done. We need not observe that this is spoken ironically. M. Dacier is thus: “Oui sans doute, est-ce qu’il y a rien qui ne soit honnête dans le vol? à moins que le voleur ne soit assez sot pour se laisser surprendre.” Mr. Theobald, “Doubtless, if he have but policy enough to conceal his knavery, what can be more commendable?” The most learned Bentley hath given us the following note on this place:—“This is the interpolation of some most stupid block-head, which ought to be sent packing, with a vengeance, to the place from whence it came. Here is not even the least trace of metre; not the least sense. How can that be *reputable* which is *concealed*? What the devil is the meaning of *δει λαθεĩν*?” As to the sense of this passage, we hope we have already satisfied our reader, and as to the metre, with the utmost deference to this exact man, whose objection we sup-

Poverty. Look round among the orators; ¹ whilst they are poor, how careful of conserving the rights of the people; but, when they are once enriched with the public money, they immediately part with their honesty; they form designs against their city, and declare war with the people.

Chrem. Why, there is no great falsehood in this, as malicious a witch as thou art; but you shall not suffer the less; so I would not advise you to swagger: for I will not forgive your endeavor ² to deceive us into an opinion that poverty is superior to the god of riches.

pose, (for he hath mentioned none) is, that the last foot but two is a trochee. That objection lies equally against v. 591. Whoever will consider the numbers in this scene, will find, that except ending them like hexameters, with a dactyl and a spondee, the poet's chief care hath been to have thirty times in each, two short syllables being equal in time to one long one.

¹ *Orators.* In Greek Πήτορες. We have in the first scene rendered this word by "public incendiaries." In neither sense can it be made familiar to a mere English reader. In all the little cities of Greece there were certain men, who undertook, on public occasions, to harangue and advise the people, sometimes honestly, and for their good; but more frequently they stirred up the people to pursue their disadvantage, in order to effect their own private interests. There were many of these at Athens, against whom our poet is very liberal of invectives; in which he is surely worthy of commendation, since TO MAKE USE OF POPULAR INTEREST, AND the CHARACTER OF PATRIOTISM, IN ORDER TO BETRAY ONE'S COUNTRY, is perhaps the most flagitious of all crimes.

² *I will not forgive your endeavor.* We have ventured to

Poverty. Nor can you refute a word of what I have said. You trifle only: your wit, like an unfledged bird,¹ can but flutter; it is unable to rise.

Chrem. But how comes it that all men shun you as they do?²

Poverty. Because I make them better.³ This may be chiefly perceived in children, who shun their fathers, for advising them to pursue what is most excellent: so difficult is it to distinguish what is right.

add a word or two here, the better to explain the meaning of the original, which is extremely concise, and from which M. Dacier and Mr. Theobald have deviated, and both the same way. The Greek is obscure, by the collocation and false pointing. The learned reader may not be displeased, if we insert the passage pointed, as we apprehend, it ought to be.

Ἄτὰρ οὐχ ἤττόν, γ' οὐδὲν κλαύσει (μηδὲν ταύτῃ γε νομήσης)

"Οτι γὰρ ζητεῖς τοῦτ' ἀνσπείσειν ἡμᾶς, ὥς ἐστιν ἀμείνων.

Πενία πλούτου. The parenthetical sentence relates to what he says in the foregoing line: a collocation usual among the Greeks.

¹ *Your wit, like an unfledged bird.* We have taken a paraphrastical licence with the original here; of which, to explain the meaning in English, we have been obliged to amplify a metaphor into a simile.

² *How comes it, &c.* This is exactly from the Greek. M. Dacier hath added, "S'il y a tant d'avantage à t'avoir;" Mr. Theobald, "if there are so many advantages in the possession of thee."

³ *Because I make them better. Verbatim.* M. Dacier, "Les hommes ne me fuyent que parcequ'," &c. Mr. Theobald, "men only fly me for, &c."

Chrem. You will not, I hope, say, that Jupiter doth not truly distinguish what is right, for he hath riches: but he keeps them to himself, and sends you only ¹ to us.

Poverty. O you dotards, whose minds are blinded with obsolete opinions——Jupiter is most certainly poor——and I will convince you of it plainly: for, if he was rich, would he, when he celebrates the Olympic games, ² (for

¹ *Sends you only.* The Greek is ταυτῇ, in the third person, which Dr. Bentley well observes, adds a politeness to the original. But this is an instance of the superiority of the Greek language, which is not to be imitated, nor even explained to those that do not understand it.

² *Olympic games.* M. Dacier seems to understand the Παιῶν ἀγῶνα to mean the original institution of these games, in which she follows Nicodemus Frischlinus the Latin translator; but indeed ποιεῖν ἀγῶνα doth not signify to institute, but to celebrate; of which the learned reader will not want any examples. So ποιεῖν γάμους, to celebrate (not institute) a marriage. So in Latin *facio* is used for *celebro*: as,

“Cùm faciam vitulâ pro frugibus”——VIRG.

Where, by the way, *rem sacram* is understood. Indeed Jupiter was not the institutor of these games; the original of which is, by different authors, attributed to different persons; but the better opinion is, that they owe their origin to Hercules, the son of Alcmena, as we find it in Diodorus, Solinus, and others. They are said to have been first dedicated to the honor of Pelops, and were perhaps, by one of those who revived them, (for they were more than once discontinued) dedicated to Jupiter; in which sense the poet is here to be understood, when he derives the crown with which the victors were rewarded from that God. There is a wonderful beauty

which purpose he convenes all Greece every five years) crown with wild olive those whom he proclaims the victorious wrestlers. It would rather become him, if he was rich, to give them a golden crown.

Chrem. By this instance you see he manifestly shows his respect for riches: for, with the utmost frugality, and hatred to expense, he binds the victors with trifles, and keeps all the riches to himself.

Poverty. You endeavor to fasten a much greater scandal than poverty on him, by saying he is rich; and at the same time so void of liberality, and so tenacious.

Chrem. May Jupiter confound thee; but may he first crown thee with wild olive.

Poverty. For your presuming to contradict me, when I say that poverty is the authoress of all your blessings, may you¹——

in this passage. The pious Chremylus, who, notwithstanding his piety, had lived in extreme poverty, was incensed with Jupiter for keeping his riches to himself. The answer of Poverty to this, representing Jupiter to be poor, and consequently, that riches were, in reality, of no value, since the greatest of the gods was destitute of them, is admirable; to which we may add the reply of Chremylus, who concludes from the instance of Poverty, that Jupiter was an avaricious, not a poor, Deity. Perhaps no poet hath ever outdone this.

¹ *For your presuming, &c. may you.* Here Poverty was going to denounce some vengeance on the old men, but is interrupted by Chremylus. These interruptions are extremely frequent in all the comic poets, and give a great life to the action; for which reason I am surprised, that they are always

Chrem. You need only consult Hecate,¹ to know whether wealth or poverty be preferable : she will tell you, that the rich send her in every month a supper ; but that the poor snatch it away before it is laid on the table—— But go hang yourself, without muttering another word : for, though you should persuade us of the truth, you shall not persuade us to believe you.²

dropped by M. Dacier ; for Mr. Theobald's imitating her, we account from his wonderful complaisance to that lady.

¹ *Consult Hecate.* “ The Athenians had a great veneration for this goddess, believing that she was overseer of their families, and protected their children. Whence it was customary to erect statues to her before the doors of their houses, which, from the goddess's name, were called Hecatæa. Every new moon there was a public supper provided at the charge of the richer sort, which was no sooner brought to the accustomed place, but the poor people carried all off, giving out that Hecate (the moon) had devoured it ; whence it was called Hecate's supper. This was done in a place where three ways met, because this goddess was supposed to have a three-fold nature, or three offices. And the above-mentioned sacrifices or suppers, were expiatory offerings to move this goddess to avert any evils which might impend by reason of piacular crimes committed in the highways, as we are informed by Plutarch.” Potter's *Antiquities*, Vol. I. p. 386. The reason why these suppers were offered to her on the first days of the month, was, because they reckoned their months by the moon. The beauty of this passage in Aristophanes need not be remarked.

² *Though you should persuade us, &c.* The Greek is, “ though

Poverty. O city of Argos, ¹ hear what he says.

Chrem. Call rather for your mess-mate Pauson. ²

Poverty. What shall I do? unhappy that I am!

Chrem. Go hang yourself immediately.

Poverty. Whither shall I go?

Chrem. To the pillory. Nay, loiter not—but away with you.

Poverty. Verily, verily, you will send for me hither again.

Chrem. When we send for thee thou shalt return: but, at present, go, and be d——d: for riches seem to me much

you shall persuade me, you shall not persuade me.” Straton, the comic poet, hath a line something like this, “whom persuasion herself could hardly persuade.” Where, by “persuasion,” is meant the goddess whom the Greeks called Πείθειν, *i. e.* persuasion. We have in our own language an hyperbolical phrase like it, viz. “I would not believe my own eyes.”

¹ *O city of Argos.* M. Dacier very justly reproves the scholiast for having falsely quoted this line from the Phœnissæ of Euripides; but I know not for what reason she herself will have this taken from any other tragedy. The poet seems only to reproach the Athenians with the frugality and temperance of the Argives.

² *Pauson.* He was an Athenian painter, whose indigence became proverbial. Mr. Theobald will have him to have been an acquaintance and cotemporary with one Δούκ Ούμφρεϊ, of whom the Greek historians, whom we have consulted, make no mention.

*Do not
forget
to mention
him*

x

*Do not take a wild guess of Mr. Theobald's
"Do not Humphrey" ?*

the more eligible; and you may blubber,¹ and tear your hair off with madness, if you please.

Blepsid. For my part, the moment I have got² the riches which I have set my heart upon, I will feast it with my wife and children; and then, having washed and perfumed myself, as I return from the bagnio, I will f—t in the faces of all the handicraft-men, and this hag Poverty, wherever I meet her.

SCENE VI.

Chremylus, Blepsidemus.

Chrem. Well, this goal-bird is gone at last; and now we two will, with the utmost expedition, convey the god into the temple of Æsculapius, and there lay him on a bed.

¹ *You may blubber.* We have here translated the original, which is very concise, with a little amplification. M. Dacier and Mr. Theobald agree in giving it a different turn.

² *The moment I have got.* The conclusion of this scene is excellent, and very much tends to convey that instruction, which the poet intended in this play, to the Athenians. You have here a man even on the prospect of riches, resolving before-hand to indulge himself not only in all kinds of luxury, but in the highest insolence to those who were formerly either his equals, or perhaps his superiors. The reader may collect from a word in this speech, not very decent to repeat, and which the poet had before mentioned in the character of Argyrius; a particular kind of insolence in use among the Athenians towards their inferiors.

Blepsid. Let us then lose no time, lest we should meet with a second interruption in our business.

Chrem. Here, Cario, bring out the blankets, and conduct Plutus himself with all proper ceremonies,¹ and bring too all the other things which are prepared within.

¹ *With all proper ceremonies.* The Greeks, whose superstition our poet here derides, were very ceremonious on all these occasions; and, doubtless, there was at the end of this act a ridiculous procession made over the stage from the house of Chremylus to the temple; in which Cario, by performing some absurd ceremonies, had an opportunity of diverting the audience. Madam Dacier hath applied these ceremonies, contrary to the reading in the original, to the preparations within, and not to the leading forth Plutus. I cannot here avoid mentioning a conjecture which that ingenious and learned lady makes in her preface. "As Plutus," says she, "must pass the whole night in the temple, the spectators could not wait for his return. It was, therefore, absolutely necessary that this comedy should be performed on two several days; for it was not possible for Aristophanes to shorten this time, the spectators being too well apprised of the tedious ceremonies used on such occasions." In another part of her preface, she enlarges on this head, and says, "Nothing can be more certain than this division in the times of the representation; which, if we attend to it, will give a great beauty to this performance. And if it was taking a liberty, it was no more than what the festival in which this play was exhibited, gave him. Moreover, the novelty could not fail pleasing the Athenians in so extraordinary a subject, and inspiring them with a very great curiosity and impatience of knowing to what so great a preparation and such magni-

ACT III. SCENE I.

*Cario, Chorus.**Cario.* O Yes! All ye happy old men, who in the festi-

ficent promises tended." I cannot forbear thinking, that this lady hath a little too much indulged her talent in conjecturing, in the present instance. For, as I apprehend, it is founded on no authority whatever; so neither is there, I conceive, any reason for so extraordinary a supposition. The curiosity and impatience which she mentions to have been raised in the audience, seems not at all to favor her opinion; but indeed I see no cause to imagine, that the Athenian, any more than any other stage, was confined to such exactness, that the full time must be allowed for the strict performance of every thing supposed to be done behind the scenes; or that the imagination of the spectators cannot as well fancy a thing transacted in less than the real time, as it can impose on us to believe that the actors are performing their parts behind the scenes, as well as they had done on the stage, when we know the contrary, and that they have dropped the drama, and are conversing in their own characters. If I had not a very particular tenderness for the sex, as well as regard for the truly great learning and ingenuity of this lady, I should, in any other, condemn an affected nicety, which I may venture to call the enthusiasm of a critic. This puts me in mind of a humorous complaint (for I believe the gentleman was not very serious in it) of a very nice critic, who, some few years ago, in his remark on a play, where the fine gentleman carries off his mistress into her bed-chamber at the end of an act, exclaims against the civil office which the poet imposed on his

vals of Theseus,¹ have been contented with very scanty meals of bread ; and all others, who have any honesty in you.

Chor. What is the matter, thou best of all thy gang ; for thou seemest to be the messenger of some good news.

Cario. My master hath had some excellent good fortune ; or rather indeed, Plutus himself hath had it : for, from blindness, he hath recovered his eyes ; ² ay, not

audience, whom he intimates to be no better than pimps on that occasion.

¹ *Festivals of Theseus.* “The Athenians, upon the eighth day of every month, celebrated a festival in memory of Theseus, because he was the reputed son of Neptune, to whom these days were held sacred ; or because on his first journey from Troezen, he arrived at Athens upon the eighth of Hecatombæon ; or in memory of his safe return from Crete, which happened on the eighth of Pyanepsion, for which reason the festival was observed with greater solemnity upon that day than at any other time. Some also there are, that will have it to have been at first instituted in memory of Theseus’s uniting the Athenians into one body, who before lay dispersed in little hamlets up and down in Attica. It was celebrated with sports and games, with mirth and banquets ; and such as were poor and unable to contribute to them, were entertained upon free cost at the public tables.” Potter’s *Antiquities*, Vol. I. p. 404. The drollery in this character of Cario, is admirably supported throughout the whole play.

² *Hath recovered his eyes.* There is an ambiguity in the Greek word, which signifies “ is blinded,” or “ has all obstructions and disorders removed from his eyes.” The

only the sight, but the beauty of them, by the favorable assistance of Æsculapius.

Chorus. You give me joy, you set me a huzzaing.

Cario. Yes ; joy is come to you now, whether you will or no.

Chorus. I will halloo forth the praises of Æsculapius, the father of so fine and numerous a progeny, and great light to mankind. ¹

scholiast says, that this expression is taken from Phineus, a tragedy of Sophocles, which is lost ; and we are to suppose it to be introduced here in order to burlesque it, which is much more likely than that he should intend so vile and senseless a conundrum, as some of his commentators have here with wonderful labor hammered out for him.

¹ *The father, &c.* Εὔπαιδα in the original, a word which may have various significations ; we here follow M. Dacier, who hath chosen the most humorous. By his fine and numerous offspring, are meant the physicians who were called (or, as M. Dacier says, called themselves) the sons of Æsculapius ; and those of Athens were, according to that lady, “ pas de trop beaux garçons. Those who have written comments on this play,” says she, “ have not understood the wit of it.” Indeed Mr. Pope, in his *Dunciad* seems to have no inadequate notion of these learned gentlemen, whose business seems to be to

—“ explain a thing till all men doubt it,

And write about it, goddess, and about it.”

Mons. Dacier, in his remarks on Hierocles’s comment on the Golden Verses of Pythagoras, says, that meeting with a very difficult passage in that author, he in vain sought the

SCENE II.

Cario and the Wife of Chremylus.

Wife. What can be the meaning of all this hallooing? will it bring us any good tidings; for I have waited within for this Cario a long time, in expectation of them?

Cario. Quickly, quickly, mistress, give us some wine; that you may drink yourself——(which is, I know, what you dearly love to do) *aside*: for I bring all manner of blessings to you in a lump.

Wife. And where are they?

Cario. You shall soon know them in what I am going to tell you.

Wife. Dispatch them immediately.

Cario. Hasten then: for I will deduce the whole affair from foot to head.¹

assistance of commentators, “who are,” says he, “very tedious in explaining what is most obvious to the understanding, but seldom say one word on any place which is difficult and obscure.” The truth of which observation is truly exemplified in the comments on this play, where, excepting a few places perhaps in Giraldus, there is scarce a remark on any single beauty. Their true character, in short, is that they are,

——“Chartam consumere nati.”

¹ *From foot to head.* We have here preserved the original as near as possible; though perhaps we might have been excused, if we had followed M. Dacier’s example, and dropped it; nay, we might have pleaded the authority of Horace likewise.

Wife. Deduce nothing on my head, I beseech you.

Cario. What? not the good things which have just now happened.

Wife. None of your affairs,¹ I desire.

Cario. As soon as we arrived at the temple,² conduct-

Et quæ

Desperes tractata nitescere posse, relinuas.

Unless, perhaps, this advice was given rather to an original author than a translator. To say the truth, however cold this may appear in our language, as M. Dacier complains it would in hers, there is more beauty in the passage than even that lady observed. Aristophanes here rallies the extravagant superstition of the Athenians, who were afraid of hearing even good news, when told in an ominous manner. The explanation of the place is this: It was a custom among the Greeks, when any one denounced an evil against them, to wish the omen might fall on the head of the person who denounced it. *Cario*, therefore, by inverting the common phrase, instead of from the head to feet, or, as we express it, from head to tail, says, "from the feet to the head;" and the poet, by an apt collocation of the words, hath introduced the very phrase *εἰς κεφαλὴν σοι*, which was used by way of imprecation, which immediately frightens the old woman, and drives both *Plutus*, and what was perhaps stronger, her curiosity out of her head, with the fear of the omen.

¹ *None of your affairs.* There is a pun in the original, neither capable of being preserved, nor much worth it. We have endeavored therefore to give another turn to the sentiment.

² *At the temple.* There were at Athens two temples of *Æsculapius*, one within the city, the other without the *Piræan*

ing a man,¹ then in the most miserable condition ; but now happy and blessed, if any one is so : first, we led him to the sea, and then washed him.

Wife. By Jove, he must be truly happy ; a poor old fellow, ducked in the cold water.

Cario. But when we came within the holy precincts, and the loaves, and previous sacrifices² were placed on the altar, together with a cake well hardened with fire, we laid Plutus down, and, according to the custom, every one of us fell to making his own bed.³

Wife. What, were there any more of you who wanted the god's assistance ?

Cario. There was only one, Neoclides⁴ by name ; who gate, near the sea, in which diseased and polluted persons used to be washed by way of purification ; a custom which the Greeks had probably from the Egyptians.

¹ *Conducting a man.* As the ancients made their Gods of men, so in their discourse they applied to them not only the passions and vices incident to mortals, but their names likewise. Thus Virgil, *Divum nemo*, i. e. *ne homo*, literally, not one man of all the Gods.

² *Previous sacrifices.* There were many ceremonies performed previous to their sacrifices, too tedious to be here set down. Our curious reader may find them accurately digested in the fourth chapter of the second book of Potter's Antiquities.

³ *Making his bed.* This custom of sleeping in the temple was, on many occasions, practised by the Greeks and Romans.

⁴ *Neoclides.* He was an Athenian orator, and had embezzled the public money ; he had also an infirmity in his eyes,

is indeed blind, but in thieving hath always out-shot those who can see. There were likewise many others afflicted with various diseases. At length the sacristan ¹ having put out the lights,² ordered us to fall asleep; and charged us, if we heard any noise not to cry out. We then laid down all of us in a very orderly manner: but I could not sleep. A pot of pease-porridge, which lay at a little distance from an old woman's head, had a violent effect on my nostrils: indeed, I had a supernatural motion to creep towards it; when looking up, I saw the priest greedily snatching away the cakes and figs from the sacred table:

for which he is aptly introduced here to be cured by Æsculapius. He is again mentioned as having this blear-eyedness, "Ecclesiast." v. 254.

¹ *Sacristan.* The Greek is "the servant of the God." "These were priests," says our learned archbishop, "waiting on the Gods, whose prayers the people desired at sacrifices, at which these seemed to have performed some other rites distinct from the Ceryces, who were the cooks of the sacrifice." Potter's Antiquities, Vol. i. p. 208.

² *The sacristan having put out the lights.* "It is matter of astonishment, that Aristophanes took the liberty of rallying their religion and priests, before a people so devoted to superstition, and whom it was so dangerous to endeavor to undeceive. He very pleasantly here lays open the cheats of these priests, who presided over the sacrifices; who, after having stolen away the offerings in the night, the next morning imposed on the credulous multitude, by telling them, that the God had devoured the whole. There are many eminent examples of these tricks of the pagans recorded in holy writ." Dacier.—By holy writ, she means the Apocrypha.

after which he took his rounds about the altars, to see if there was any loaf left, and consecrated ¹ all he found into a wallet, which he carried for that purpose; upon which, I, thinking this was a great act of devotion, stood up in my turn to the porridge-pot.

Wife. O thou wretch, hadst thou no apprehension of the god?

Cario. Yes, by all the gods, had I, an apprehension, that, having his garlands ² on, he would get to the pot before me: for that the priest had told me before-hand.³

¹ *Consecrated.* This expression is so humorous, that I am surprised that the other translators have dropped it. The inimitable pleasantry of this whole scene need not be hinted even to an ordinary reader.

² *Having his garlands.* The images of the pagan Deities were crowned with garlands. The ridicule here is exquisite.

³ *For that the priest had told me before-hand.* M. Dacier, “Car ce que venoit de faire le sacrificateur m’en disoit trop pour ne me donner point de peur.” Mr. Theobald, “For the priest had done enough to give me suspicious of that kind.” But the meaning of Aristophanes is much finer and stronger than this. Cario would say, that he had great reason to fear the God would intercept his meal, since the priest had very gravely assured the congregation, that the God himself would, whilst they were asleep, eat up whatever eatables he found in the temple. This he might well believe, for he had it from the priest himself. As for what had past, it was without his suspicion; for of that he had not been fore-warned by the priest. For a farther illustration of this the reader may consult the history of Bel and the Dragon. There is still more latent humor in this place. The old woman’s mess was not

As for the old woman, when she heard the noise, she put out her hand to secure her porridge; I, hissing like one of Æsculapius's serpents, seized it in my teeth; upon which she immediately drew it back into her bed, and wrapping herself up close, very quietly laid down till she outstunk a cat, f—ting with fear; but I then fell to supping up the pease-porridge. When my belly was full, I betook myself to my repose.

Wife. But, did not the god appear to you?

Cario. No, not yet. After this I did a very merry thing: for, as the god was approaching, I let a loud f—t; for my belly was cursedly puffed up with the porridge.

Wife. For which he certainly held thee in the utmost abhorrence.¹

Cario. No, but his daughter Jaso,² as she attended her designed for a sacrifice, but for her own supper; yet as the priest had stolen every thing from the altars, Cario had some reason to fear, that the God finding nothing else, would be forced, in his hunger, to take up even with the old woman's pottage.

¹ *The utmost abhorrence.* There is a peculiar propriety in the Greek word, which properly signifies “to abhor a man for f—t—g.” M. Dacier hath avoided these gross expressions, which, as we have undertaken to give a translation of Aristophanes, we do not think ourselves at liberty to do, unless where a literal translation would offend the chastity, as well as the delicacy of our readers: the former of which we shall always carefully avoid offending.

² *His daughter Jaso.* Æsculapius had three daughters, Hygeia, Jaso, and Panacea, i. e. Health, Cure, Universal

father, reddened a little; and her sister Panacea turned away her head, holding her nose; for I assure you I f—t no frankincense.

Wife. But Æsculapius himself——what did he?

Cario. O by Jove, he never troubled his head about it.

Wife. Surely, according to your account, this god hath very little regard to good manners.

Cario. My account!——I say the gold finders¹ and he live upon the same commodity.

Remedy. Madam Dacier's note on this place is very ingenious. "There is more satire," says she, "in this, than the translators or the commentators have observed. Aristophanes would here insinuate that the priests brought courtesans by night into the temples, to feast with them on the consecrated offerings. This could not have been touched in a more fine and delicate manner."

¹ *The gold-finders and he.* The Greek is *σκατοφάγον*, "one who lives on human ordure." There is more wit than cleanliness in the expression. It was reported of both Hippocrates and Æsculapius, that they carried their curiosity very far for the sake of their patients. Giraldus is severe on the learned faculty here, in applying this epithet too directly to them all, "who, in the cure of diseases," says he, "are obliged to be familiar with p—ss, and more nasty things, by which trade as they support themselves, they may in some sense be called *σκατοφάγοι*." We have introduced the word "gold-finders," not so much with desire of adding any pleasantry to Aristophanes, which is not in the original, as from necessity, that without the utmost flatness we might preserve a little decency in this place, which the nice reader hath already, I believe, had too much of. I cannot, however, quit it, with-

Wife. O wretch!

Cario. After this, I presently covered myself up, out of fear; and he very decently went his rounds, and inspected all the cases: immediately afterwards his apprentice brought him his stone mortar, and his pestle, and his box.¹

Wife. What! a stone-box?

Cario. No, by Hercules! not the box, but the mortar was of stone.

Wife. Sure, some terrible judgment will fall on thy head: for, how could you see all these things, when you say you had covered your head in the bed-clothes?

Cario. I saw all through the hole of my cloak; and, by Jupiter, there are windows enow in it. The first operation was performed on Neoclides, for whom the god ordered his apprentice to pound an ointment in a mortar, throwing in three heads of garlick of Tenos;² which being

out observing, that a certain French translator hath rendered this place by a *detour*, in order to avoid the grossness, and given an idea ten times more strong than the original.

¹ *His stone-mortar, his pestle, and his box.* *Wife.* *What a stone-box?* M. Dacier, “Une petite boîte, un pillon, et un Mortier de Marbre.” Myrrhine, “Quoi, une petite boîte de Marbre?” Mr. Theobald, “A little casket, pestle and mortar of marble.” Every one perceives that the French collocation, which is directly contrary to the Greek, makes the woman’s answer entirely improper: Mr. Theobald hath therefore carried his complaisance too far in imitating it. The ridiculous exhibition of Æsculapius, in the character and with the implements of an apothecary, cannot fail to strike.

² *Tenos.* An island, one of the Cyclades.

done, he himself mixed it with benjamin¹ and mastic,² and then adding some vinegar of Sphettus,³ he spread the plaister, and put it on, having first turned his eye-lids outwards, that he might put him to the greater torment.⁴ Poor Neoclides first squalled, then roared, then took to his heels, and ran away full speed: at which the god laughing heartily, said to him, sit quietly down with your plaister; I will take care⁵ you shall keep your oath, and abstain from the courts of justice.

¹ *Benjamin.* A gum of great value among the ancients: Pliny says that it was sold for its weight in silver.

² *Mastic.* M. Dacier and Mr. Theobald, "Sea-onions."

³ *Vinegar of Sphettus.* Sphettus was a borough in the tribe Acamantis in Attica. Some will have this to be a satire on that particular borough alluding to their sharp or sour disposition.

⁴ *Put him to the greater torment.* This stroke on the physicians needs no great explanation; Moliere, in one of his comedies, introduces a doctor asking his patient how he does? to which the patient answers, "Much worse." The doctor replies, "So much the better."

⁵ *I will take care, &c.* "This passage is one of the most difficult in all Aristophanes. The Latin interpreter hath explained it very ill, 'Ut si jurejurando fortè postules dilationes causarum, ego te liberem.' This is neither intelligible nor just. The Greek scholiasts have given other explanations, which are no better. One says, the Greek signifies, 'to the end that after your oath, I may give you a true pretence to keep out of the court;' for it was the custom, when they were desirous not to appear before the judges, to swear that they had substantial reasons to prevent them. Here then

Wife. What a wise deity this is, and what a lover of the people!

Aristophanes accuses Neocrides of having often forsworn himself, to avoid appearing to the summons of the citizens. This would be very good sense, if it could agree with the answer of Myrrhina, 'that Æsculapius had the public interest at heart.' Another scholiast explains it thus: 'To the end that I may give you a true pretence of swearing that you cannot come into court;' and says, that Æsculapius alludes to the custom of those, who well foreseeing that they must be condemned, counterfeited sickness to obtain delay of their sentence; after which the whole process was to be renewed from the beginning. But this is still less agreeable to what follows. I am persuaded I have given the most natural sense to this passage. This Neocrides was a noted informer, who went every day into the courts of justice, in order to accuse some of the citizens, and to enrich himself with their spoil; and, as he was very distempered, and had often need of the assistance of Æsculapius, he was a great frequenter of his temple, where, to enforce his prayers, he constantly swore that he would renounce his former way of life; but no sooner had he left the temple, than he returned to the same courses. Æsculapius, who had been too often deceived by him to confide any longer in his oaths, takes care himself to oblige him to keep his promise, by increasing his distemper: on which account this good woman answers, 'that Æsculapius hath the public interest at heart.' If we understand it in this manner, the passage is full of wit, and the character so strong, that it is impossible to see it, without recollecting some such person; for the age of Aristophanes is not the only one which hath produced a Neocrides." Dacier. This is indeed the better sense, and we have accordingly embraced it.

Cario. He then sat down by Plutus. And first he stroked his head; ¹ next, taking a clean napkin, he wiped round his eye-lids. Panacea now covered his head and face with a scarlet cloth, after which the god whistled; immediately two serpents ² of a supernatural size rushed forth from the sacred part of the temple.

¹ *First he stroked his head.* The ridicule of this ceremony is very apparent.

² *Two serpents.* The poet hath already in this scene alluded to these. Many reasons are given why the ancients consecrated the serpent to Æsculapius, as the god of physic. First, that the serpent doth in a manner renew his youth, by casting his skin every spring and Autumn, which Virgil hath described in these beautiful lines :

Cùm positis novus exuviis, nitidusque juventâ
Volvitur, aut catulos tectis aut ova relinquens,
Arduus ad solem linguis micat ora trisulcis. *Georg.*

Secondly, from the quick-sightedness of this creature; whence the eye of a serpent was proverbially applied to very quick-sighted persons: So Horace,

Cur in amicorum vitiis tam cernis acutum,
Quàm aut aquila, aut serpens Epidaurius.

Lastly, they were sacred to this god, as they afforded in themselves excellent remedies for many distempers. A huge serpent was brought from Epidaurus to Rome, which the Romans worshipped, believing it to be Æsculapius himself. Our apothecaries give a serpent in their arms, by which some conceive they intimate their true descent from Æsculapius; others will have it to be in commemoration of Apollo's killing

Wife. O good God!¹

Cario. And these creeping softly under the scarlet cloth, fell a licking the eye-lids; at least so it seemed to me: and in less time than you could drink off ten half-pints of wine, Plutus, (I assure you, Madam, it is true,) was started up with his eyes open. I clapped my hands for joy, and wakened my master; presently the god disappeared,² and the serpents returned into the inmost recesses of the temple. Now several of those who lay near him fell to embracing him³ with inexpressible affection, and

the serpent Python; for they are likewise of the family of that deity. For my own part, I imagine this to be only a kind of sign, signifying that they have excellent vipers in their shops.

¹ *O good God!* The superstition of this woman, which is so excellently played upon by *Cario*, must have afforded great diversion to the spectators.

² *The God disappeared.* “Æsculapius had other patients to visit; but, on account of the great noise which was occasioned by the cure of Plutus, and the hurry in which they all rose from their beds, the god thought proper to retire, lest the whole cheat should be discovered. All this is perfectly well conducted.” *Dacier.*

³ *Those, who lay near him, fell to embracing him.* There is great spirit in this whole passage. “At the very moment that Plutus recovered his sight, all the sick persons, who lay in the temple in order to be cured, forgot all their diseases, and the deity himself from whom they expected their cure, and thought of nothing more than making their court to the god of riches.” *Dacier.* To which I shall add, that there is a

kept awake till it was broad day-light. I uttered vehement praises of the god, for having so suddenly restored Plutus his eyes, and made Neoclides blinder than before.

Wife. O Æsculapius, what a powerful deity art thou! but, tell me, what is become of Plutus? ¹

Cario. He is coming: but there is a prodigious crowd gathered about him. Those who had led honest lives, and been poor, embraced him, and all received him with much pleasure; but those who had dishonestly acquired great substance, knitted their brows, and looked very sour.² Whereas the former, crowned with garlands, followed behind, laughing, and shouting. The shoes of the elders resounded³ as they went; for they advanced, beating time, as it were, with their feet: come on, my boys, with one accord, every man of you, dance and caper, and figure in;⁴

particular beauty, as the learned well know, in the tenses used in this speech, which we have endeavored to preserve in the translation.

¹ *But tell me what, &c.* Notwithstanding the religion and superstition of this old woman, her devotion cannot keep her thoughts a moment from Plutus.

² *Looked very sour.* The Greek is, “looked like Scythians,” whose fierce and savage manners were well known.

³ *The shoes resounded.* This verse was probably taken from some tragedy, which it intends to burlesque. The literal translation would be, “The shoes of the old men resounded with their well-tuned advances.”

⁴ *Figure in.* The Greek is χορεύετε, “dance in chorus.” Our translation agrees with the best and gravest authors who have written on the subject of country-dances.

for no man will hereafter tell us, when we enter his house, that there is no pudding in the pot.¹

Wife. O Hecate, I will crown thee——with a string of buns² for this good news.

Cario. Make no longer delay; for the men are near our door.

Wife. Well, I go in, and will fetch the customary entertainment,³ to welcome his new-purchased eyes.

Cario. And I will go and meet the procession.

¹ *Pudding in the pot.* The Greek is “Meal in the bag.”

² *I will crown thee with a string of buns.* We have before observed, that those who returned with good news from the oracles were crowned with garlands. The old lady therefore tells Cario, that, as a reward of the good news which he hath brought of Plutus from the temple, she will crown him——but instead of adding, “with a garland,” as the spectators expected, she adds, “with a string of buns.” This could not fail raising a laugh in an Athenian audience.

³ *Entertainment.* “At Athens, when a slave was first brought home, there was an entertainment provided to welcome him to his new service, and certain sweetmeats were poured on his head, which for that reason they called *Καταχύσματα*.” Potter’s Antiquities, Vol. I. p. 7. The poet here uses the word *νεωνήτοισιν*, “new-bought or purchased.” The old lady will therefore have Plutus entertain his new-purchased eyes in the same manner as they entertained their new-purchased slaves.

SCENE III.

PLUTUS, CHREMYLUS, *and his WIFE.*

Plutus. First, I pay my adoration to the sun ;¹ then I salute the illustrious soil of the venerable Pallas,² and all the country of Cecrops,³ which hath hospitably received me. I blush at my misfortunes, when I recollect with what men I have ignorantly passed my time, and have shunned those, who were only worthy of my conversation. Unhappy as I was, who knew nothing of the matter all this while. How wrong have I been in both ; but, for the future, turning over a new leaf, I will show all mankind, that it was against my will I gave up myself to the wicked.

Chrem. Go, and be hanged, all of you——what troublesome things are friends, who immediately appear,⁴ when

¹ *First, I pay my adoration to the sun.* M. Dacier prettily remarks how well this is adapted to a man who hath just recovered his sight.

² *The illustrious soil of the venerable Pallas.* Athens, which was built by Neptune and Pallas, but took its name from the latter, of whose protection they were most vain. The poet therefore takes this occasion to flatter the opinion of his audience.

³ *And all the country of Cecrops.* Attica, whose first king was Cecrops.

⁴ *Immediately appear.* This is literal from the Greek, and the beauty of it need not be remarked. M. Dacier,

any good fortune attends you! They tread on my heels, and squeeze me to death, every one expressing his affection for me: for, who hath not spoken to me! with what a crowd of elders have I been surrounded in the Forum!

Wife. Your humble servant, dear Sir, (*to Plutus*) and yours, Sir, (*to her husband*)—Give me leave, Sir, according to our custom, to welcome you with this entertainment.

Plutus. By no means: for, at my entrance into your house, on the recovery of my sight, it becomes me better to make you a present than to receive one.

Wife. Will you be so unkind not to accept it?

Plutus. Not till I am at your fire-side: ¹ for there it is the custom to receive it. After I have got clear of this troublesome crowd: for it becomes not our poet ² to

“naissent;” Mr. Theobald, “spring up.” I apprehend this whole speech may be tasted by an English, as well as an Athenian audience.

¹ *At the fire-side.* This was among the ancients the most sacred part of the house, where their household gods were placed, and particularly the goddess Vesta, who is called by the same name, taken from a Chaldean word signifying *fire*.

² *This troublesome crowd, for it becomes not our poet.* Aristophanes here very pleasantly includes all the spectators in the number of the followers of Plutus; a liberty frequently taken by the comic poets. The latter part of this speech is a just ridicule on the many absurd methods, which the poets have taken to ingratiate themselves with their audience. The Duke of Buckingham, in his “Rehearsal,” hath likewise very excellently ridiculed this artifice; where Mr. Bays attempts to move the compassion, and next to frighten the spectators into applaud-

throw figs and sweetmeats among the spectators, in order to bribe their applause.

Wife. You say very true : for, yonder I see stand up Xenicus¹ ready to scramble for the figs.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

CARIO.

How sweet is it, Sirs, to get riches, without sending out any ventures for them ! How is a whole heap of good things rushed in upon us, without doing the least evil ! Riches, so acquired, are indeed a blessing.—Our bin is full of fine flour ; our vessels, of black sweet-flavored wine ; our trunks, of gold and silver ! Well, it is wonderful ! Our well is full of oil, our oil-cruises are filled with precious ointment ! Our garret with figs ! Every vinegar-jar, and tray, and pot, are all become of shining brass ! Our fish platters, which were of wood, and something rotten, are

ing him. The method our poet hath taken has still a farther beauty, from its being so well adapted to his subject ; intimating, that the Athenians were so very avaricious and corrupt, that their voices were to be purchased even by figs and sweetmeats.

¹ *Xenicus.* We have chosen to make this a proper name, following the common editions which place the accent on the first, and not on the last, syllable. Dr. Bentley hath proposed an ingenious correction, Εὖ πάνυ λέγεις ὄχλος δὲ ξενικὸς οὐτοσί.
“ You say very well ; but this rabble of strangers, &c.”

now all silver ! Our dresser is of a sudden become ivory ! we servants now play at even and odd with golden staters,¹ and are so elegant, that we wipe our posteriors with garlic, instead of stones. And now my master, with a garland on his head, is sacrificing within, a hog, a goat, and a ram ; the smoke hath sent me out :² for I was able to bear it no longer, it so offended my eyes.

SCENE II.

DICEUS and CARIO.

*Diceus.*³ (*speaking to a youth.*) Follow me, my child,⁴ and let us go together to the god.

Cario. Hey dey ! who comes here ?

Diceus. One, who was miserable ; but is now fortunate.

Cario. O then, certainly you are of the number of good men, as it should seem.⁵

¹ *Golden staters.* A silver stater is worth near three shillings ; and consequently a golden one must be worth above forty.

² *The smoke hath sent me out.* The delicacy of Cario is admirable. He cannot bear what his master supports very well.

³ *Diceus.* The Greek is Δίκαιος, “ a just man ; ” but we judged the calling him by a proper name would be more agreeable to an English reader.

⁴ *Follow me, my child.* Giraldus well observes, that, by his manner of speaking, this youth was his son, and not his servant.

⁵ *Certainly you are of the number of good men, as it should*

Dicæus. Most certainly.

Cario. And what do you want?

Dicæus. I am going to the god; who is the author of great blessings to me. You must know, that I, having inherited a very sufficient fortune from my father, supplied my necessitous friends with it: for I thought it the surest way to secure to myself a comfortable life.

Cario. No doubt you soon saw the bottom of your purse.¹

Dicæus. You are in the right.

Cario. You were then certainly miserable.

Dicæus. Even so. But I thought, when I assisted them in their necessity, that I should find them friends indeed, if I should ever want any; whereas, when that day came, they turned their backs, and pretended not to see me.

Cario. Ay, and I make no doubt laughed heartily at you into the bargain.

Dicæus. Very true. I was almost destroyed by the drought——of my dishes.²

seem. Here is a kind of contrast in the original between the words *δῆλον* and *ὡς ἔβικας*, which we have endeavored to preserve. M. Dacier has added, “Au moins en avez vous la mine;” Mr. Theobald, “Indeed your face speaks for you.”

¹ *Saw the bottom of your purse.* Literally, “Your riches failed you.”

² *By the drought of my dishes.* M. Dacier, “Ils rioient de ce que j’avois vendu tous mes meubles;” Mr. Theobald, “laughed at me for having sold my all.” But this is not the meaning of the original. Indeed drought may metaphorically signify scarcity; but a scarcity of dishes would not indicate a

Cario. But it is not so now with you?

Dicaeus. No: for which reason I am come to the god to offer my adoration, as I ought.

Cario. But this old cloak here¹——what, in the name of Jupiter, is the meaning of this old cloak, which the boy carries after you?—Pray tell me.

Dicaeus. I intend to dedicate it to the god.

man's wanting bread. The poet uses here the Ἀπροσδόκητον, and instead of expressing the drought of the season, or of his lands, which ruins farmers, and might be expected from the former part of his speech, when he said he was ruined by the drought, he adds pleasantly, of his dishes. Among the lower sort of our own people, a kitchen adorned with shining plates and dishes is thought no sign of their good house-keeping; and among the higher, “Will you foul a plate with me?” is as much as to say, “Will you dine with me?”

¹ *But this old cloak.* We have been obliged to repeat this word, to preserve the force of the original, which otherwise would have been lost by the English collocation. The ancients, on their delivery from danger or misfortune, used to consecrate some memorial to the gods. Thus Horace,

——me tabulâ sacer
Votivâ paries indicat uvida
Suspendisse potenti
Vestimenta maris Deo.

Alluding to the custom of hanging up in the temple of Neptune the garments in which they had escaped shipwreck. This old man therefore having just escaped out of poverty, very pleasantly proposes to consecrate this emblem of it to the god, who had delivered him.

Cario. I hope you were not initiated into the great mysteries¹ in this——

Dicæus. No, but I have shivered in it these thirteen years.

Cario. And those old shoes there?

Dicæus. And these have spent the winter with me.

Cario. And do you dedicate these too?

Dicæus. Yes, by Jove.

Cario. You have brought most grateful offerings to the deity, no doubt.

SCENE III.

SYCOPHANTES,² CARIO, and DICÆUS.

Sycoph. O unhappy and undone man that I am! O

¹ *Initiated into the great mysteries.* These were the Eleusinian mysteries, which were celebrated at Eleusis, a town of Attica. They were of two sorts; the great and the little; the first were sacred to Ceres, and the latter to Proserpine. They were the most solemn of all their religious ceremonies, and all the Athenians indifferently were initiated into them, unless such as had been convicted of any heinous crime. The manner of initiation was very formal, and may be seen at large in Potter's Antiquities, Book II. chap. 20. The garments, in which they were initiated, were held sacred, nor did they ever leave them off till worn to rags. This allusion therefore of Cario, while he rallies the mean offerings, which Dicæus was carrying to the god, is full of drollery.

² *Sycophantes.* We have made a proper name of this; in the original, it signifies an informer, or, as Archbishop Potter

thrice unhappy, and four times, and five times, and twelve times, and ten thousand times——O! O! of what a variety of ills is my fortune composed! ¹

says, “a common barreter.” These persons were very great pests among the Athenians, and our poet hath frequently lashed them; particularly here, where he introduces one on the stage. The following short account of these people, extracted from the learned archbishop, may not be disagreeable to our unlearned reader. “Every corner of the streets was pestered with swarms of turbulent rascals, that made it their constant business to pick up stories, and catch at every occasion, to accuse persons of credit and reputation. These they called *Συκοφάνται*, which word sometimes signifies *false witnesses*, but is more properly taken for what we call *common barreters*, being derived ἀπὸ τοῦ συκοφάειν, ‘from indicting persons that exported figs;’ for amongst the primitive Athenians, when the use of that fruit was first found out, or in the time of a dearth, when all sorts of provisions were exceeding scarce, it was enacted, that no figs should be exported out of Attica; and this law not being actually repealed, when a plentiful harvest had rendered it useless, by taking away its reason, gave occasion to ill-natured and malicious men to accuse all persons they caught transgressing the letter of it; and from them all busy informers have ever since been branded with the name of Sycophants.” Potter’s Antiquities, Vol. I. p. 121. We need not observe that the use of the word Sycophant is much perverted in our language; and that we use it here, wherever it occurs, in the ancient sense.

¹ *My fortune composed.* The metaphor in the original is taken from wine, quite dispirited by too great infusion of water.

Cario. Apollo, and all propitious Deities defend us! What terrible misfortune hath happened to this man!

Sycoph. Have not the greatest misfortunes fallen on me this day; who am, by the means of this god, stripped of every thing I had in the world? But, if there be any justice upon earth, I'll have him restored to his former blindness again.

Dicaeus. I begin to smell the matter. This man is certainly in a very bad way; but he hath a very bad stamp¹ on his countenance.

Cario. If he is a rascal, I think, when he is in the road to destruction, he may be said to be in a very *fair way*.²

Sycoph. Where is he! where is the traitor! who promised to-day, that, when he had recovered his eyes, he would alone make us all rich;³ and now he hath them, he puts some of us into a worse condition than we were in before!

Cario. Whom, pray, hath he served so?

Sycoph. Whom! why me myself.

Cario. You! Ay, but you are a rogue, and a house-breaker.

¹ *A very bad stamp.* This is literal from the Greek, and is a phrase often used by our author, to denote a vile and infamous fellow. It was a metaphor taken from their money. We have a proverb in English not unlike it, *a bad penny*.

² *In a very fair way.* We have here preserved the opposition between the κακῶς and καλῶς πράττειν in the original.

³ *Make us all rich.* This scandalous fellow lays claim to those promises, which were made to good men only; in which number he impudently enrols himself. This is true humor.

Sycoph. No, Sirrah! but there is not a grain of honesty in such fellows as you——nor is it possible but you must have robbed me of my money.

Cario. Bless me! what a magisterial air the Sycophant advances to us with.

Dicaeus. The man is plainly perishing with hunger.

Sycoph. [to *Cario.*] Come, you Sir, this instant, into court:¹ you shall be put on the wheel, and racked² till you confess all your rogueries.

Cario. You be racked yourself!

Dicaeus. By Jupiter the preserver; this god is worthy of the highest honor from all Greece; for exacting such just vengeance of Sycophants.

Sycoph. What a wretch am I!——Ha! do you too laugh at me, after having a share in the plunder! for whence could you otherwise come by this fine coat; you, whom yesterday I saw wrapped up in a miserable old cloak!

¹ *This instant into court.* This is one of those strokes of nature, which, though they are instances of the greatest penetration in the writer, are sure to escape all readers, but those of accurate judgment and strict attention. This informer, who hath been deprived of all his wealth, as a punishment for having procured it by informations on penal laws against his fellow-citizens, still preserves his old disposition, and is for hauling into court every man he sees.

² *Put on the wheel and racked.* This, among the Athenians, was inflicted only on slaves; it was a torture not inflicted to punish their crimes, but rather to extort a confession of them, agreeable to the question used by the civil law.

Dicaeus. I regard you not. See on my finger this amulet-ring, ¹ which I bought of Eudamus for a drachma.

Cario. There are no charms in your ring against the bite of a Sycophant.

Sycoph. I think this very injurious treatment: you revile me, but will not tell me what is your business: for you are here on no good design, I am certain.

Cario. With no design for your good, you may be well assured of that.

Sycoph. By Jupiter, but you will sup to-night at my expense.

Dicaeus. May this be true; and may you and your witness ² burst your bellies—but not with meat.

Sycoph. Do you deny it, you villains, when I smell such a flavor of fish and roast-meat from within? phu, phu, phu. [*sniffing.*]

Cario. What do you smell, sirrah?

Dicaeus. I suppose he smells the cold: for his clothes are in a very tattered condition.

¹ *This amulet-ring.* The ancients superstitiously placed great virtues in rings. The story of that, which Gyges king of Lydia wore, is well known. Eudamus was a professor of the magic art, and pretended to make rings, which should be preservatives against the bites of serpents. Cario, by his answer, implies that this informer was a more venomous and pernicious animal than a serpent; and that against his malice there was no guard whatever.

² *And your witness.* These informers usually carried some profligate fellow about with them, who was by his evidence to support their informations.

Sycoph. This is insufferable. O Jupiter, and all you gods! are these fellows to insult me! how my indignation rises, that an honest man, and a patriot, should be reduced to such a condition.

Dicæus. You an honest man, and a patriot! ¹

Sycoph. Yes, no other comes near me.

Dicæus. Answer me a few questions.

Sycoph. What are they?

Dicæus. Are you a farmer?

Sycoph. Do you think me such a madman?

Dicæus. You are a merchant then, I suppose.

Sycoph. I pretend to be so, ² when I see occasion.

¹ *You an honest man, and a patriot.* Literally, M. Dacier, "Tu as préféré le bien de la patrie à tes interets;" Mr. Theobald, "When did you ever prefer your country's good?"

² *I pretend to be so.* "As the country of Attica was very barren, the inhabitants subsisted only by commerce, on which account the Athenian laws indulged their merchants with great privileges. They were exempted from going to war, and from paying taxes. This gave occasion to very enormous abuses; for there were always some, who, to avoid the payment of these taxes, or that they might not be obliged to list in their armies, pretended to be in partnership with the merchants, who, for a small bribe, lent their hand to the imposition. This is what the informer means, by answering that he pretended to be so when he saw occasion." Dacier. This method of perverting the privileges which the laws of a country indulge to some particular members or bodies in it, hath not been confined to Athens. Such instances, when they happen, fall very justly under the lash of a comic poet. And it is by exposing such persons and things, that unlicensed

Dicæus. What then? — Have you learned any handicraft?

Sycoph. No, by Jove.

Dicæus. How do you live then, if you do nothing for your livelihood?

Sycoph. I am a superintendant of the public weal, and of the good of every private person.

Dicæus. You! and how came you, pray, to take this office upon you?

Sycoph. Such is my will and pleasure.

Dicæus. Thou villain! dost thou pretend to be an honest man, who art odious to every one, by doing what doth not belong to you?

Sycoph. Doth it not belong to me, thou gull, to serve my country with all my might?

Dicæus. Is an officious meddling with every man's business serving your country?

Sycoph. Yes, to assist the dead letter of the law; and not to suffer those who offend it to escape with impunity.

Dicæus. The public takes care to provide proper judges.

Sycoph. But who will inform?

Dicæus. Whoever pleases.

Sycoph. *I am then that he*, and thus the affairs of the city devolve on me.

Dicæus. The city hath indeed a sorry protector. Would it not be better for thee to live quietly and peaceably, and intermeddle in nobody's affairs?

comedy will be found of great use in a society; and a free stage and a free people will always agree very well together.

Sycoph. You describe the life of a silly sheep: for such is the life of a man without business.

Dicaeus. You are resolved then not to reform.

Sycoph. No, not if you would give me Plutus himself, and all the benjamin in Cyrene.¹

Dicaeus. Off with your cloak immediately.²

Cario. The gentleman speaks to you,³ Sir.

Dicaeus. And your shoes too.

Cario. It is all to you, Sir.

Sycoph. Touch me either of you, whoever pleases.

Cario. *I am then that he.*⁴ (*Here Cario lays hold on*

¹ *Benjamin in Cyrene.* In the Greek, “all the Benjamin of Battus.” This benjamin-herb was a great branch of the Grecian commerce with Cyrene, a city built by Battus, who planted there a colony from Thera, an island in the Ægean sea.

² *Off with your cloak immediately.* The last words of the informer, by which he testifies such an abhorrence of reformation, destroy all patience in Dicaeus. The latter part of this scene consists chiefly in action; nor could the distress of the informer fail of giving the greatest delight to the Athenians, who held such persons in the utmost detestation.

³ *The gentleman speaks to you.* It was customary to strip slaves, when they were going to whip them; for which reason, the speech of Dicaeus seemed to be directed to Cario, to whom the informer, by some motion of his hand, applied it: Cario therefore answers in triumph, “it is not to me, Sir, but to you, that he speaks.”

⁴ *I am then that he.* As the informer ended his speech with ‘Ο βουλόμενος, “whoever pleases,” which were the words Dicaeus had used a little before, when the informer had asked, “who should inform?” Cario here answers in the same

the informer, and strips him, at which his witness runs away.)

Sycoph. What a wretch am I, to be thus stripped in open day-light !

Dicæus. This is your punishment for seeking a scandalous livelihood, by meddling with what doth not belong to you.

Sycoph. Take care what you do ; for I have a witness present.

Cario. No, sirrah, your witness hath taken to his heels.

Sycoph. Ha ! Wo is me ! am I then left alone ?

Cario. What, now you roar ?

Sycoph. Wo is me ! I say again.

Cario. Lend me your old cloak then, that I may cover the gentleman's nakedness.

Dicæus. By no means. It is already sacred to Plutus.

Cario. How can it be offered more properly than on the shoulders of this rogue and robber ? Plutus should be adorned with rich clothes.

Dicæus. But tell me to what use shall we put these old shoes ?

Cario. I will nail them up to his forehead, ' as you nail offerings against the wild olive-tree.

words, which the informer had just before, very haughtily made use of, Οὐκ οὐδὲν ἐκείνός εἰμ' ἐγώ. " I am then that he."

¹ *Nail them up to his forehead.* We have before, in our notes on this scene, mentioned the custom of the ancients, of consecrating their garments, &c. in their temples. These were fastened to posts, as Virgil, in his 12th Æneid:

Sycoph. I will depart ; for I see you are too many for me : but, as soon as I find any of my evidences, though never so bad a one, I will bring this god, stout as he is, to condign punishment this very day : for this single fellow manifestly subverts¹ the government, and all without obtaining any authority from the senate or people.

Dicaeus. Well, Sir, since you march in my furniture, make as much haste as you can to the bagnio-fire, that you may get the first place, and warm yourself. It is a post I myself have often stood centry at.

Cario. The master of the bagnio will lug him out by the heels : he will know him the moment he sees him ; for the fellow hath rogue written in his face—But come, let us two go in, that you may pay your adoration to the Deity.

———“*Figere dona solebant*

Laurenti Divo.”———

Cario therefore very pleasantly desires to make such a post of the informer.

¹ *Manifestly subverts.* The poet here makes use of a delphic sword, *i. e.* one of two edges : for this may be understood either as a satire on the informer, who hath the impudence to accuse Plutus of manifestly intending to subvert the democracy by those very means, which were in reality the only ones of establishing it : or, it may be applied to the government, which, as he insinuates, gave no countenance to any such good measures.

SCENE IV.

Old Woman, Chorus, Chremylus.

Old Woman. Tell me, honest friends, are we indeed arrived¹ at the house of this new Deity,² or have we missed our way?

Chorus. Know, my pretty miss, you ask in very good time; for you are arrived at the very door.

Old Woman. Well then, shall I call some-body out?

Chrem. There is no need of calling any one; for I am just come out myself: but it will be necessary for you to tell me your business.

Old Woman. O Sir! I have suffered very great and sad mischiefs indeed; for ever since this god here hath recovered his eye-sight, I have had a most uncomfortable life.

Chrem. What is this? you are an informeress,³ I suppose.

¹ *Are we indeed arrived.* This translation is almost *verbatim*, and the plural number here used indicates this old lady to have brought her retinue with her; whence we may conclude her to have been of some consequence. M. Dacier and Mr. Theobald agree here in the use of the singular number.

² *The house of this new Deity.* This is contemptuously spoken by the angry old lady.

³ *An informeress.* We have here taken the same liberty with our language, as M. Dacier hath taken with hers; and which, indeed, Aristophanes had authorised her to do by his example.

Old Woman. Not I, by all that is sacred!

Chrem. What, I suppose, you never had the good fortune to be toast-mistress¹ at your club?

Old Woman. You banter me : but, alas ! I am troubled with a terrible itch.²

Chrem. What itch ? discover quickly, what itch ?

Old Woman. Listen then. I had a dear young fellow,

¹ *The good fortune to be toast-mistress.* The ancients used to cast lots who should preside at their computations. The prize-lot, on this occasion, had a particular mark or letter on it ; a custom which they borrowed from the methods used in electing their judges, which we have touched on before. Among the Romans, who derived this custom from the Greeks, the lot denoting the king or master of the feast, had the name of Venus inscribed on it. Whence Horace,

“ Quem Venus arbitrum

Dicet bibendi ? ”——

He again mentions the same custom in another place,

“ Nec regna vini sortiere talis.”

There is something not very unlike this in use even among us at twelfth-tide, when the king and queen of the entertainment are chosen by lot : Chremylus therefore pleasantly supposes here, that the old lady's complaint against this new Deity was, that she could not have the good-fortune to draw this lot, of which it appears the ancients were extremely vain. M. Dacier and Mr. Theobald have alike misunderstood this passage.

² *Troubled with a terrible itch.* This is literal. M. Dacier, “ C'est une passion bien plus homête qui cause tout mon mal ; ” Mr. Theobald, “ A passion much more honorable has been my ruin.”

poor indeed he was, but a handsome well-shaped lad, and good-natured; for he supplied all my wants, in the modestest, and prettiest manner: and I, on the other hand, supplied him with all these necessities——

Chrem. What were the necessities, pray, which he chiefly used to want of you?

Old Woman. Not many: for he was a bashful youth, and had a most awful respect for me——He would ask me twenty drachmas to buy him a coat, and eight to buy him a pair of shoes. And he would ask me to buy a cheap gown for his sisters, and a poor wrapper for his mother. Sometimes he would beg four medimni¹ of wheat of me.

Chrem. By Apollo, what you tell me is no great matter; it is indeed plain he had a most awful respect for you.

Old Woman. And these things, he constantly told me, he did not ask as the reward of his performances, but out of pure friendship, that he might wear my coat for my sake, and remember me by it.

Chrem. This young fellow, by your account, must have been most desperately in love with you.

Old Woman. Ah! the impudent varlet is not now of the same mind, but is exceedingly altered; for, upon my sending him this cheececake, and a whole saucer full of sweetmeats, with an assignation, that I would come to him in the evening——

Chrem. What did he do?——tell me.

¹ *Medimnus.* The name of a measure used at Athens, containing six bushels.

Old Woman. He returned me the cheesecake,¹ intending, that I should come no more thither to him; nay, and besides all this, he ordered the messenger to tell me, that the Milesians were formerly stout fellows.²

¹ *He returned me the cheesecake.* By the word *τουτονι*, this appears to be the cheesecake which she had mentioned before, and which she then held in her hand, though the words in the original are different.

² *The Milesians were formerly stout fellows.* “ This proverb was formerly applied to those who were sunk from their former fortune, or had degenerated from the manners of their ancestors. And it will suit with all those who have ceased to be what they were, and are become worse, as old men from youths, or poor from having been rich; or reduced to a private station from a throne, or into obscurity from eminence. The Greeks assigned various accounts of the original of this proverb; some say, that the Milesians formerly excelled all other nations in military glory, and conquered all those with whom they had any war. In after-times, Polycrates, king of Samos, when he was entering upon a war, being desirous to call in the assistance of the Milesians, sent to consult the oracle on that affair: the God answered,

Πάλαι ποτ' ἦσαν ἄλκιμοι Μιλήσιοι.

“ The Milesians were formerly stout fellows.”

Others report another story: when the Carians intended to attack some other nation, and had decreed to employ auxiliaries from the most powerful of their neighbors, some were of opinion that the Milesians should be called in; others were for applying to the Persians. On which occasion Apollo being consulted, returned the same answer as we have mentioned before; the fame of which was spread all over Greece; and

Chrem. It is plain this young fellow hath not a depraved taste ;¹ since now he is grown rich, he delights no longer in lentils : for formerly his poverty obliged him to take up with any dish he could procure.

the Milesians being afterwards almost all slain in a battle with the Persians, the oracle became a merry proverb. Others again write, that the Carians being at war with Darius, according to an oracle by which they were admonished to apply to the assistance of the bravest people, went to the Branchidæ, and consulted the God of that place, whether they were to call in the aid of the Milesians ; and that he answered, that “ the Milesians were formerly brave,” signifying, to wit, that they were now become weak and effeminate through luxury. But this story Zenodotus refutes from chronology ; if indeed this verse be found in Anacreon, who flourished in the age of Cyrus king of Persia, from whom Darius was the third. Politian therefore chooses rather to refer it to the morals of the Milesians, which were corrupted with effeminacy ; as does Athenæus. Aristophanes uses this proverb in his *Plutus*, and puts it in the mouth of a young man, who was again sent for by an old lady, whose company he had in his poverty frequented for the sake of her riches ; but now being become rich, he despised her whose treasures he had exhausted.” Erasmus.

¹ *A depraved taste.* Whilst he was poor, the taking up with this old woman must have been imputed to his necessity ; now it would be referred to his choice. M. Dacier, “ Le jeune homme n’est pas sot ;” Mr. Theobald, “ The youth has sense.”

Old Woman. And yet I swear to you, by the twin gods,¹ he formerly used to walk every day by my door.

Chrem. What looking for your corpse!²

Old Woman. No, only for the pleasure of hearing my voice.

Chrem. Bidding him take something,³ I suppose.

Old Woman. And then, if ever he found me in a fit of the vapors, he would caress me by the fond names of my little duck, and my little dove.⁴

Chrem. And then, perhaps, he would ask you for a pair of shoes.

Old Woman. When I have rode out in my chariot, ou

¹ *By the twin-gods.* Castor and Pollux. This oath is used even among our vulgar, *by Gemini*. The women accustomed themselves peculiarly to swear by these gods.

² *Looking for your corpse.* This is the better meaning, in which sense our author again uses the word in his "*Ecclesi-zousai*;" Æschylus and Euripides use it in the same. Indeed it is the common understanding of it. The Latins used the word *effero* in like manner. M. Dacier and Mr. Theobald interpret it in another manner.

³ *Bidding him take something.* The original is literally, "For the sake of taking something." M. Dacier, "Pour recevoir quelque petit present à la fin de la visite; Mr. Theobald, "To get some little present for every visit."

⁴ *My little duck and my little dove.* The original here is faulty. The true reading is, as the learned Bentley and Faber have most ingeniously amended it,

Νηπτάριον καὶ φάττιον.

This reading we have followed in our translation.

the day of celebrating the great mysteries,¹ I have been sure of a hearty thrashing,² if any young fellow took it into his head to ogle me : so violently jealous³ of me was this sweet youth.

Chrem. It seems then he liked to eat alone.

Old Woman. My hands were, he said, extremely beautiful.

Chrem. When they held out twenty drachmas to him.

Old Woman. And my skin, he said, had a most delicate smell.

Chrem. Very probably while you poured forth Thasian wine.⁴

Old Woman. That I had a soft and lovely eye.

Chrem. This was no awkward fellow, I find—he knows how to feed upon a rampant old woman.

Old Woman. The god, therefore, my good friend, doth not do well ;⁵ though he pretends that he will redress the wrongs of the injured.

¹ *The great mysteries.* We have mentioned these before.

² *A hearty thrashing.* The Greek is ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν, “ thrashed me the whole day.” This is used indefinitely.

³ *So violently jealous.* The vanity of this old lady is extremely humorous and natural.

⁴ *Thasian wine.* Thasus, an island in Thrace, produced very excellent wine of a sweet savor.

⁵ *The God doth not do well.* The allegory intends, that the young fellow had devoured the substance of this lascivious Old Woman ; by which being enriched, he forsook her, and refused to bestow any gratuities on her for former favors. This teaches a moral, which may be of use to my fair readers who are upwards of fifty.

Chrem. Tell me what you would have him do, and it shall be done immediately.

Old Woman. It is surely reasonable, that he should compel this young man, to whom I have done so much good, to return some good offices to me, otherwise it is not just he should enjoy any advantage whatever.

Chrem. What! did he not make you a suitable return every night?

Old Woman. Ay, but he promised never to leave me, whilst I was alive.

Chrem. True! but he now thinks you alive no longer.

Old Woman. Indeed, friend, I am considerably pined away with trouble.

Chrem. You seem rather to be pined away with rottenness.

Old Woman. You may draw me through a ring.

Chrem. Ay, if it was as big as a hoop.

Old Woman. As I live, here comes the very youth I have been all this while accusing; he seems to be come a reveling.¹

Chrem. He doth so; for he hath a garland and a torch with him.

SCENE V.

*Neaniscus,*² *Old Woman,* *Chremylus.*

Neaniscus. Save you good people.³

¹ *A reveling.* M. Dacier and Mr. Theobald translate it, "To pay a visit to the god Comus:" but I apprehend ours is the meaning of the author.

² *Neaniscus.* In Greek, "a young man;" we have given him a proper name in conformity to our stage.

³ *Save you good people.* The Greek is Ἀσπάζομαι, "I

Old Woman. What says he ?

Neaniscus. My old friend, you are grown grey all on a sudden.

Old Woman. What a wretch am I, to be thus abused !

Chrem. It seems he hath not seen you a long while.

Old Woman. How long, sirrah !—he was at my house but yesterday.

Chrem. I find drink hath a contrary effect on him to what it hath on others ; it makes him see the clearer.

Old Woman. No ; but he is always saucy¹ in his behavior.

Neaniscus. O Sea-Neptune, and all ye antique gods,² what a number of wrinkles she hath in her forehead !

[*Holding his torch up to her face.*

embrace ;" a word which hath a visible effect on the old lady. This was likewise a polite term of salutation, as we have before remarked. We could not preserve this pleasantry in the translation.

¹ *He is always saucy.* This is the reverse of what the old lady had before said. But she is willing to impute his present behavior to any cause, rather than to a contempt of her charms. This is extremely natural and humorous.

² *Sea-Neptune, and all ye ancient gods.* We have before remarked the propriety with which the ancients invoked their gods. Diogenes Laertius, in his *Life of Thales*, whose doctrine was at this time in vogue, tells us, that philosopher asserted " Water to be the first principle of all things," ἀρχὴν δὲ τῶν πάντων ὕδωρ ὑπεστήσατο. Homer, in his thirteenth *Odyssey*, calls Neptune Περσεύδατον, the most ancient of the

Old Woman. Ah! Oh! don't thrust your torch in my face.

Chrem. She is in the right: for, if a single spark should seize her, she will burn like a dry olive-branch.¹

Neaniscus. Are you willing we should have a little play together, after this long absence?²

Old Woman. Where, wretch?

Neaniscus. Here, with these walnuts.

Old Woman. What play?

Neaniscus. How many teeth have you?

Chrem. I will have my guess. Perhaps, she hath three or four.

Neaniscus. Pay me: she wears³ but one, and that is a grinder.

gods. To which I will only add, that our poet, in his *Birds*, v. 702. makes the ocean elder than the earth.

Sea-Neptune. In our notes on the first act we have shown that the Athenians worshipped this Deity by many names, the Horseman, the Sea-Neptune, &c.

¹ *A dry olive-branch.* The Greek is *Είρεσιώνη*, an olive-branch covered with wool, which the Athenians loaded with all kinds of fruits, and hung out before their doors as an antidote or charm against the plague. This superstition is here squinted at by the poet.

² *After this long absence.* The Greek is *Παύσαι διὰ χρόνου*. The Latin translation is, "Lusitare diutulè;" M. Dacier, "Jouer un moment;" Mr. Theobald, "Play a little." All erroneously. *Διὰ* before the genitive case of nouns of time signifies an intermission; so *Διὰ πολλοῦ χρόνου*, a few lines before, and in a thousand other instances.

³ *Wears.* So is the Greek. Perhaps it would be too fine to infer from hence, that even this was a false one.

Old Woman. Sure, you are out of your senses, villains, to endeavour before so many men¹ to besprinkle² me thus with your jests.

Neaniscus. Sprinkle you!— I am sure you would be the better for it, if you was well washed.

Chrem. No, truly : for she is now varnished over ; but should the paint be once washed away, the furrows of her face will appear plain.

Old Woman. As old a man as you are, you seem to me a very simple fellow.

Neaniscus. Perhaps, he is tempting you. I suppose he doth not think I see him playing with your pretty bobbies.

Old Woman. No, by Venus, you rascal, he touches not mine.

Chrem. Not I, by Hecate!³ I am not so simple : but, harkee, young gentleman, you must not have such an aversion to this lass.

Neaniscus. I ! I dote on her !

Chrem. Why, she accuses you.

¹ *So many men.* This must include either the chorus, or the spectators.

² *Besprinkle.* M. Dacier hath declined this passage, which she says cannot be rendered in her language ; we hope we have preserved it in ours.

³ *By Hecate.* As the old woman had affectedly sworn by Venus, the goddess of youthful pleasure, the old fellow pleasantly swears by Hecate ; intimating, that this was her proper deity to swear by. This goddess was otherwise called Proserpine, and presided over the lower world, whither this old lady was shortly going.

Neaniscus. Of what doth she accuse me?

Chrem. She says you are insolent, and have told her, that the Milesians were formerly stout fellows.

Neaniscus. I will not fight with you for her.

Chrem. Why, pray?

Neaniscus. In respect to your age; for I should permit this in no other: but, as you are, you may go off safely, and carry the lass along with you.

Chrem. I well know your meaning—you will not now vouchsafe to converse with her, as you have.

Old Woman. Who is he, who is so free to deliver me up?¹

Neaniscus. I do not choose a conversation with one who hath been embraced by thirteen thousand years.

Chrem. But, since you have drank the wine, you ought to drink the dregs also.

Neaniscus. Ay, but these are very old and fusty indeed.

Chrem. Well then, a strainer² will cure all that.

Neaniscus. But go in: for I am desirous to consecrate these crowns to the god.

Old Woman. And I too have something to say to him.

Neaniscus. But I will not go in.

Chrem. Courage, man, never fear; she shant ravish you.

¹ *So free to deliver me up?* The Greek is simply, "Who is he who delivers me up?" M. Dacier, "Y a-t-il au monde un autre homme qui voulût me ceder de la sorte?" Mr. Theobald, "Who but he would so shamefully resign me?"

² *A strainer.* i. e. The young fellow might draw off all the good of the old woman, namely, her money, &c. and leave the rest behind.

Neaniscus. You speak very kindly : for I have sufficiently pitched up the old vessel already.

Old Woman. Enter ; and I will follow you behind.

Chrem. O king Jupiter, how closely the old woman sticks to the youth, even as a limpet doth to the rock !

ACT V. SCENE I.

CARIO, MERCURY.

Mercury knocks hard at the door, and then retires.

Cario. Who knocks at the door ?¹—Heyday ! What is the meaning of this ? Here is nobody.—What, hath the door made all this lamentation, when no-body hurt it !

Mercury. You, you, Cario ; I speak to you, stay.

Cario. Pray tell me, sir, was it you that knocked so heartily at our door ?

Mercury. Not I, by Jove !² but I should have knocked had not you prevented me, by opening it ; but run quickly

¹ *Who knocks at the door ? Here is nobody.* “ Mercury having knocked at the door of Chremylus, hides himself, in order to make it apprehended, that the door, at the approach of the deity, had made this noise of its own accord ;” says M. Dacier. A religious poet would have introduced the servant in a fright ; but ours, by the pleasantry of Cario, seems to insinuate, that the god miscarried in his design. This whole scene is indeed as delicate, and at the same time as severe a ridicule on the religion of the Greeks, as is possible to be invented.

² *Not I, by Jove.* This is a direct falsehood, and intended

and call your master hither ; and then call his wife and children ; then his servants, then the bitch, then yourself, and then the sow.

Cario. Pray, what is the meaning of all this ?

Mercury. Jupiter, sirrah, intends to make a hotchpotch of you altogether, and then souse you into the Barathrum.¹

Cario. Such criers as you, truly deserve a tongue cut out :² but wherefore, pray, is he contriving this for us ?

Mercury. Because you have committed the most horrible of all facts : for ever since Plutus hath recovered a

to expose the character of this deity, of whom indeed the most superstitious of the ancients seem to have had no very honorable opinion.

¹ *Barathrum.* We have described this already. M. Dacier, “ la riviere ;” Mr. Theobald, “ the river.”

² *Deserve a tongue cut out.* We have here preserved the original ambiguity of this, which M. Dacier hath professedly declined, declaring her inability, to which Mr. Theobald hath modestly subscribed. It was the custom of the Greeks to give the tongues of the victims, as being an unclean part, to the crier (*Præconi*) because, according to some, they admonished the people before the sacrifice began, “ ut linguis faverent,” to be favorable with their tongues. Others will have it to be, because the crier gets his livelihood by his tongue. When *Cario* therefore says, “ Such a crier deserves a tongue cut out,” it may be understood by Mercury, either to allude to this custom ; or, by way of menace, to insinuate that, as a reward for his ill news, he deserves to have his own tongue cut out. It may likewise be observed here, that the ancients used to sacrifice a tongue to Mercury on account of his eloquence.

glimpse of sight,¹ no one hath sacrificed to the gods any frankincense, or laurel, or cake, or any victim; or, in short, any thing at all.

Cario. No, faith! nor will not either: for I am sure you have taken very little care of us.

Mercury. Well, as for the other gods, I trouble not myself much: but I myself am ruined and undone.

Cario. Why, this is modestly spoken.

Mercury. Formerly I received every morning all kind of good things from the tavern-women,² such as wine-cakes, honey, figs, as much as was decent for Mercury to eat: but now I go all day hungry, and have nothing to do but stretch out my legs, and sleep.

Cario. Very justly: since, notwithstanding all these good things, you often made losers³ of those who gave them you.

Mercury. O miserable deity!—O for that cheesecake,⁴

¹ *A glimpse of sight.* The expression in the original is very emphatical. We have endeavoured to preserve it.

² *Tavern-women.* Mercury presided over all sorts of roguery; wherefore the tavern-keepers, who, it seems, understood the use of bad wine and scanty measures in those early days, were wont to sacrifice every morning to this god, in order to obtain success in their knavery.

³ *You often made losers.* This is extremely pleasant; Cario intimates, that notwithstanding their dexterity in their craft, they were often detected and punished for their roguery.

⁴ *O for that cheesecake.* Nothing can be exposed in a more ridiculous light than Mercury in this scene.

which used to be dressed for me on the fourth day of the moon.¹

Cario. You desire² one who is absent, and call for him in vain.

Mercury. O! for a gammon of bacon, which I used to feed on.

Cario. Leap upon the bottle³ here in the open air.

¹ *The fourth day of the moon.* The fourth of every month was sacred to Mercury, as other days were to other gods. Giraldus fancies that it is hence we call the fourth day of our week *Mercurii Dies*.

² *You desire.* The reader, in order to taste this, must be acquainted with the story to which it alludes. Hercules had the misfortune to lose his favorite youth Hylas, in the expedition to Colchis; nor would he be prevailed upon by the importunities and angry remonstrances of his companions, to depart, till they all assisted him, in bellowing after him, Hyla, Hyla! At last one of the company despairing to see the youth any more, repeated to Hercules this line, which probably was in some play:

Ποθεῖς τὸν οὐ παρόντα καὶ μάτην καλεῖς.

Cario therefore pronounced this line in a ridiculous bemoaning voice.

³ *Leap upon the bottle.* This leaping upon the bottle was an exercise practised at a festival celebrated in honor of Bacchus, at which they sacrificed a he-goat; because, as that animal destroys the vine, they supposed him odious to the god. Of the victim's skin they made a bottle, which they endeavoured to leap upon with one foot; which who first did, received it full of wine as a prize: this was called ἀσκιωλίαζειν, the word here used. *Cario* attempts wretchedly to pun on the word

Mercury. O those meals of tripe, which I have made?

Cario. The wind in your own tripes turns your meditations that way.

Mercury. O those cups of wine and water¹ equally mixed up!

Cario. You shall not stir till you have drank this cup also.²

κωλῆ in the preceding line, which it is impossible to keep in our language. This indeed the English reader hath little reason to regret; for the conceit is so poor in the original, that I can hardly excuse Aristophanes for having put it even into the mouth of a slave.

¹ *Wine and water.* The ancients sacrificed pure wine to the other gods, but to Mercury an equal mixture of wine and water.

² *This cup also.* This place hath very much puzzled the learned. M. Dacier hath translated it, “L’on auroit bien mieux fait de ne te donner que de l’eau, le vin n’est pas bon aux fous.” If this be a translation at all, it is a translation of some other book; for it hath not the least relation to this. Mr. Theobald, “If you could but meet with such a one here, you would scarce be in haste to return to your own quarters.” This interpretation is taken from the Latin of Nicodemus Frischlinus; “Hunc si imbibas, tu hinc nunquam mediteris fugam.” Neither can this be deduced from the original. The interpretation of Giraldus is not, in my opinion, much nearer the truth. He would have Cario, while he says these words, deliver a cup of wine to Mercury. But, in the first place, It doth not appear that Cario had any cup in his hand. 2dly, It would be inconsistent with the character of that slave, who

Mercury. Will you assist one, who hath a great friendship for you?

Cario. Ay, if you want any thing within my capacity of helping you to.

Mercury. If you would but give me¹ one of those well-baked loaves, and a piece of that flesh you are sacrificing within.

would have more naturally drank off the wine himself. 3dly, This would be very disagreeable to the continued raillery and ill-treatment with which he behaves to Mereury through the whole scene. Lastly, It would be repugnant to what immediately follows. Bisetus, in his Greek Annotations, seems to have approached nearer. "Some," says he, "refer τὰύτην, not to the cup, but to a f—t which Cario lets." This will be very consonant to the character of Cario, and to the manners, which, as we have remarked, our poet hath so frequently reprehended in the Athenians, and was likely enough to raise a laugh in the audience. The old scholiast points, I apprehend, at the true meaning of this passage. Cario says, "You shall not run away till you have drank this cup also," i. e. "You have not yet come to the end of your misfortunes; you shall have no more sacrifices nor respect to your deity, but shall suffer all the indignities I think fit to offer you." The suffering misfortunes was frequently expressed by the phrase of "drinking a cup." So Æschylus, Plautus, &c. Not to mention any of those many instances to be found both in the Old and New Testament.

¹ *If you would but give me.* "This is very pleasant between two servants; and Aristophanes here shows, that the servants of his time acted like those of ours; and that such as were in place, supported those that were out of one."

Cario. But they must not be conveyed out.¹

Mercury. Why, when you used to filch any vessel from your master, I always assisted you in concealing it.

Cario. Ay, you rascal; that you might partake in the booty: for a well-baked cake came always to your share.²

Mercury. Ay, but you eat it afterwards yourself.

Cario. Well: for you had no share in the whipping, when I was taken in my rogueries.

Mercury. No remembrance of past injuries now Phyle is taken.³ So pray receive me into your house, in the name of the gods, and let me dwell with you.

Dacier. It may be necessary to acquaint our unlearned reader, that Mercury was the servant of the other gods.

¹ *Must not be conveyed out.* It was lawful to send their friends a part of some sacrifices, as we have mentioned in the first scene of this play: but of those which were consecrated to Vesta and their household-gods it was not lawful to carry away the minutest morsel.

² *Came always to your share.* This was the sacrifice which Cario made to Mercury as the god of thieves, to protect and assist him in his roguery, which the other answers with excellent ridicule on their sacrifices, "that he eat it all himself." I think it is impossible for any one to be so stupid as not to taste this pleasantry.

³ *Now Phyle is taken.* Thrasybulus, when he had resolved to endeavor the extirpation of the Thirty Tyrants, suddenly took possession of Phyle, a castle in Attica, where being attacked by the Lacedæmonians, who had imposed those tyrants on the Athenians, he obtained a complete victory. After this, a law was made, that none of the Athenians should

Cario. What, will you leave the gods to dwell with us?

Mercury. Yes indeed will I: for your affairs are in a much better situation.¹

Cario. But in what light do you esteem a man who deserts from his country?

Mercury. That is every man's country,² where he lives best.

Cario. Well, but what advantage would you bring to us, if you were here?

Mercury. I will be your turnkey,³ and stand behind your door.

for the future revive the memory of former quarrels or animosities. Mercury therefore says to Cario, if you have taken Phyle, i. e. if you are become rich, and have obtained a more splendid fortune, dont recal the remembrance of the evils you have formerly suffered.

¹ *Your affairs are in a much better situation.* Nothing can be stronger than this. He represents the possession of Plutus to be of such consequence, that it hath elated men above the gods. The greediness of the Athenians for riches, and their vast estimation of them, is finely satirised in this instance.

² *That is every man's country.* This perhaps alludes to that saying of Socrates, that he was "a citizen of the world."

³ *I will be your turnkey.* In order to make an English reader comprehend the beauty of this place, he must be acquainted that all the following occupations, which Mercury professes himself ready to undertake, were drawn from the several surnames which the Greeks gave to that god, supposing him to preside over these several offices. We have with great difficulty preserved the original throughout.

Cario. Turnkey!¹—No, we want none of your turns.

Mercury. Employ me then in my mercantile capacity.²

Cario. But we are rich, what then should we do with such a huckster³ as Mercury?

Mercury. In my crafty vocation⁴ then.

Cario. We have done with craft. Honesty is for our purpose.

Mercury. You know me to be a conductor.⁵

Cario. No, the god hath his eyes now, and wants no conductor.

¹ *Turnkey.* As thieves generally used to lurk behind doors, so they placed the statue of Mercury there, that he might drive them away. The answer of *Cario* to this is very pleasant, inferring, that he would rather encourage than expel them.

² *Mercantile capacity.* Hence, as Festus observes, the Latins gave him the name of *Mercurius*. By the Greek word Ἐμπολαῖος, he was supposed to preside over all manner of merchandise; but *Cario* satirically represents him as having to do only with the vilest and lowest trades, with which *Chremylus*, being now rich, had no concern.

³ *Huckster.* The Greek Παλιγκάπηλος, a retailer at the third hand. The merchant was called Ἐμπορος, the retailer Κάπηλος, and the huckster or sub-retailer Παλιγκάπηλος.

⁴ *Crafty vocation.* Δόλος in the original. He was supposed to preside over all craft and cunning knavery.

⁵ *A conductor.* Ἡγεμόνιος, a conductor or leader; so called, because on the public roads, where three ways met, there were statues set up to him, with three heads, on each of which were written directions, as we see on crosses in England. To him likewise was assigned the office of conducting ghosts to the other world.

Mercury. Odso! I will be master of your sports¹ —— will not that do?—This is an office, which I am sure will be very convenient for Plutus: for rich men often make matches between musicians and prize-fighters.

Cario. How useful it is to have various occupations:² for by one or the other this fellow hath found out a livelihood: it is not without reason, I find, that our judges put in³ as many tickets with their names as they can.

¹ *Master of your sports.* Ἐναγώνιος. By which surname he is mentioned by Pindar, Pyth. Ode 2. and Pausanias tells us, that an altar was set up to him by that name, where the Olympic games were celebrated.

² *Various occupations.* In the original, titles, surnames, of which no other god had so many as Mercury. “The surnames of porter, (turnkey) merchant, and man of business, (craft) and guide, (conductor) had been useless to Mercury; and he must have starved, if the surname of master of sports had not put him in mind, that he was proper to be an intendant of sports. This passage is finer than it appeared to the scholiasts and translators. Aristophanes laughs very prettily at the great number of names which the gods gave themselves, as if they took so many only to catch by the one what they could not catch by the other. Homer says of Apollo,

—— ἐπεὶ πολυώνυμός ἐστι.

For he hath several names.

And Callimachus introduces Diana praying to Jupiter to suffer her to be always a virgin, and to give her several names.” Dacier.

³ *Our judges put in.* See our note on this custom of electing their judges in the first act. Aristophanes seems here to hint at a piece of knavery, which I do not remember any

Mercury. Will nothing that I have said gain me admittance?

Cario. Yes, yes; come to the well, and wash some guts¹ for me; then you will show yourself to be a good scullion.

SCENE II.

PRIEST OF JUPITER, CARIO.

Priest. Who can direct me to the very door where Chremylus lives?

Cario. What is the matter, honest gentleman?

Priest. No good, I assure you, sir. Since this Plutus first recovered his eyes, I have been perishing with hun-

traces of, in the Athenian history, though similar tricks have been played in all countries; I mean, of putting several tickets in, with the same name inscribed on them, by which they had the better chance of being drawn; for my own part, I cannot otherwise understand the Greek itself, nor apply it to the many surnames of Mercury, as is here intended. M. Dacier, as I have already observed, seems to have misunderstood this custom; for they drew the court by lot where they were to sit as judges, and did not put their tickets into several different jurisdictions, as she conceives.

¹ *Wash some guts.* What can be more ridiculous than the office to which he applies this god, who was admitted as an inspector of sports. Hence he secretly implies, that he is now intitled to another surname, i. e. Mercury the scullion.

ger : for, indeed, I have not a morsel to eat;¹ and this, though I am the priest of Jupiter the Protector.²

Cario. And what is the reason of this, pray ?

Priest. No person thinks proper to sacrifice any longer.

Cario. On what account ?

Priest. Because they are all rich ; whereas formerly, when they were poor, the merchant returning from his voyage offered up his victim : the rogue who escaped out of the hands of justice did the same ; and when any one made a handsome sacrifice, he invited the priest to it : but now there is not one who sacrifices, no, not the least matter in the world ; nor even comes near the temple, unless those thousands who come there to lay their cates.

Cario. And have you not your lawful share of these ?³

Priest. As to Jupiter the Protector, I think proper to take my leave of him,⁴ and abide here with you.

¹ *I have not a morsel to eat.* “ Not a morsel to put in my head.” Mr. Theobald.

² *The priest of Jupiter the Protector.* “ There were at Athens six temples of Jupiter. Amongst others, there was one of Jupiter the Protector. Aristophanes introduces the priest of this temple rather than any other on the stage, because, if Jupiter the Protector had not wherewithal to maintain his priest, the priests of the other temples could not expect any thing of the same Jupiter whom they served under other names. All the beauty of this passage hath not been perceived.” Dacier.

³ *Your lawful share of these.* The pleasantry of this allusion needs not be explained.

⁴ *I think proper to take my leave of him.* This making the priest ready to forsake the service of Jupiter, when he

Cario. Courage! all will be well, if the god pleases: for Jupiter the Protector is within already: he came hither of his own accord.

Priest. You now tell me delightful news indeed.

Cario. We shall presently place (bear it with patience) Plutus where your Jupiter was formerly placed, to preserve the treasure which is behind the temple of Minerva.¹
—But give me those lighted torches there, somebody.

can no longer thrive by it, is perhaps as severe a satire on the ecclesiastics of those days, as could be easily imagined; but the answer of *Cario*, intimating that Jupiter himself hath already enlisted himself in the number of the devotees of Plutus, is as fine a piece of pleasantry as ever was invented by the wit of man. I question whether *M. Dacier* hath not unjustly complained of this place being misunderstood, and whether she herself hath rightly apprehended it; for the *αὐτόματος ἦκων* in the original doth not agree with her interpretation. Her translation is, “Le veritable Jupiter sauveur est chez nous;” meaning, as she tells us in her notes, “that there is no other protector than riches.” *Mr. Theobald* hath embraced her literally. A judicious reader will, we apprehend, see a visible difference in these two ways of understanding the original.

¹ *To preserve the treasure which is behind the temple of Minerva.* The dethroning Jupiter, to place Plutus in his stead, was, as *M. Dacier* very justly observes, a very bitter invective on the avarice of the Athenians; but there is still a farther beauty in this passage; for besides the statue of Jupiter the Protector, the Athenians had actually erected one of Plutus, with his eyes open, in this place.

—Here, priest, do you take them, and carry them before the god.

Priest. We are doing no more¹ than we ought.

Cario. Now call Plutus out.

SCENE III.

OLD WOMAN, CARIO, CHORUS.

Old Woman. What shall I do?

Cario. Take these pots, with which we are to place² the god in the temple, carry them on your head with a grave countenance. I see you have already your flowered gown on.

Old Woman. Ay, but of that which I came hither for—

Cario. All shall be immediately done for you. The young fellow shall be with you in the evening.

¹ *We are doing no more, &c.* The behaviour of this priest requires no comment.

² *These pots, with which we are to place.* “When they consecrated altars, or erected statues to the gods, they caused the young women to carry pots full of boiled pulse, with which they made their first offerings to the god, intending to signify that this was mankind’s first food. The girls who carried these pots, wore garments of various colors. Aristophanes, with great wit, rallies the old women on this occasion, that forgetting the decency suitable to their age, they endeavoured, like the youngest girls, to engage the affection of the young men. This passage is so much the pleasanter, as we see every day certain persons for whom it seems designed.” Dacier.

Old Woman. Well, if you will be bound that the youth shall visit me, I will carry the pots.

Cario. (turning to the spectators.) These pots are the very reverse of all others: for in all others the scum^{*} used to be at the top of the pot, here it is at the bottom.

Chorus. There is no reason why we should stay here longer, but follow behind: for it is usual to bring up the rear with a song.

^{*} *The scum.* There is a pun in the original not to be preserved; for γῆζῶς signifies both the scum of a pot and an old woman.

THE
Frogs,
A COMEDY,

TRANSLATED BY C. DUNSTER, A. M.

Antiqua comœdia cùm sinceram illam sermōnis Attici gratiam prope sola retinet, tum facundissimæ libertatis, etsi est in insectandis vitiis præcipua, plurimum tamen virium etiam in ceteris partibus habet. Nam et grandis, et elegans, et venusta—— QUINT.

Preface.

COMEDY formed a part of the Grecian drama not less admired than Tragedy. Aristophanes received singular marks of applause from his countrymen. The elegance of his language, the brilliancy of his wit, and the poignancy of his satire, have been universally admired. It is therefore somewhat surprising, that in an age so studious of ancient literature as the present, and which so much abounds in translations of the Greek and Latin classics, we have versions of only two of his comedies. It seems likewise unreasonable to refuse further admission into our language to an author, whose works were honored with a place under the pillow of the great Chrysostom, and whose panegyric has been so highly sounded by the learned Scaliger.

The design of Aristophanes in his writings was chiefly a moral one, though occasionally ill-directed, and diverted

from its object to serve party-purposes, or gratify some personal pique or resentment. - His comedies are a very bold and general satire on the misconduct of his countrymen. They hold forth vice and folly to ridicule in so lively and ingenious a manner, that it may be doubted whether they would not, even now, produce a more beneficial effect than any species of comedy since devised. Offensive parts, it must be confessed, there are: but whoever is the least conversant with the writings of Aristophanes will never conceive them to have been the result of a propensity to ribaldry, much less of an incapacity to furnish superior entertainment. Nor can we imagine they were introduced merely in compliance with the then prevailing taste of the Athenians. May we not therefore fairly suppose, that the grossness of those passages, for which he has been censured, was purposely adopted, to cover in some degree his satirical intention, and to mask the battery he was preparing to open, so as to give it greater effect?

A translation of the remains of the old Greek comedy is certainly a *desideratum*. The two comedies, of which we have versions, are scarcely calculated to give an adequate idea of it. The *Clouds* is throughout so directed to one object, the exhibiting Socrates in a ridiculous light, that the rich variety of satire, with which the other pieces of Aristophanes abound, is precluded; and the *Plutus*, having been written after the government had interfered to restrain the freedom of the stage, is rather to be considered as belonging to the *Middle*, than the *Old*, Comedy.

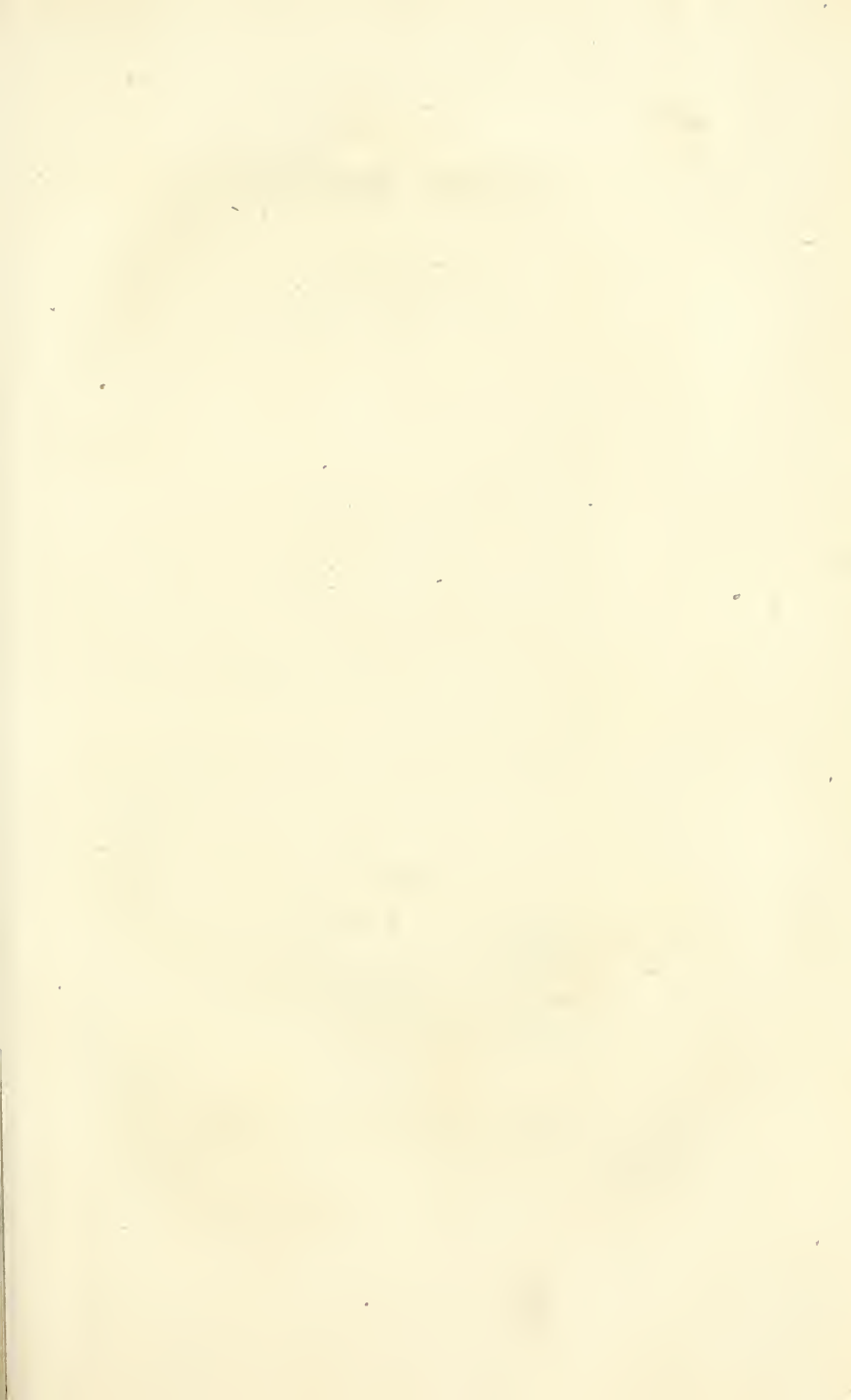
The fullest conviction, that a translation of the greater part of the works of the Old Comic Poet may very well be given, without exhibiting any thing offensive, has encouraged an undertaking, which, if the specimen now offered to the public is approved, may probably be pursued.

It does not appear, that the *Frogs* has ever before been translated into any modern language. The Latin translation of Bergler is too literal, sufficiently to illustrate obscure and doubtful passages. That of Frischliu, which Kuster has printed in his otherwise excellent edition, is full of blunders; most of which, it may be observed, are retailed by P. Brumoy in his analysis of this piece.

With respect to the present version, the dialogue is rendered in unornamented blank verse, as literally as could be consistent, with a wish to preserve some air of originality; without which the most faithful translation can never be read with pleasure. The Choruses and Lyric parts are given with more freedom, in such measures as seemed most to resemble the versification of the original. The offensive parts are either omitted, or qualified; and, it is hoped, without injuring the context.

The notes, which are subjoined, appeared necessary to make this comedy thoroughly intelligible to the English reader, or to justify the sense given of particular passages. It may be wished they had been brought into a smaller compass; but that could not be done without defeating the purposes for which they were given

This Comedy sufficiently marks its date. It appears to have been exhibited in the third year of the ninety-third Olympiad, under the archonship of Callias, the successor of Antigenes.—The particular design of it was to wean the people from their great partiality to the compositions of Euripides, who is supposed to have died the preceding year.



Dramatis Personae.

MEN.

XANTHIAS.

BACCHUS.

HERCULES.

Dead Man.

CHARON.

CHORUS of *Frogs.*

A Priest.

CHORUS of the *Initiated.*

ÆACUS.

EURIPIDES.

ÆSCHYLUS.

PLUTO.

WOMEN.

Maid Servant of PROSERPINE.

Landlady.

PLATHANA, *another Maid Servant.*

A Slave of PLUTO.

SCENE—TARTARUS and Thereabouts.

THE FROGS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

XANTHIAS, BACCHUS.¹

Xanth. SIR, may I utter some of my old jokes,
At which the audience never fail to laugh?²

¹ *Xanthias, Bacchus.* Bacchus appears with a lion's skin thrown over his own proper dress, and with a great club in his hand; meaning to pass for Hercules. He is attended by Xanthias his slave, who rides upon an ass, with a heavy bundle suspended from a staff, which he carries on his shoulder.

² *At which the audience never fail to laugh.* This seems meant to lash the taste of the Athenians for low and filthy jokes, though in the course of this piece we find the poet frequently complying with it. But the grand object of Aristophanes in his comedies being satire, he appears only to have employed wit and humor as the vehicles of it; and to have adopted the ribaldry, which is to be found in his works, merely as a cover, under which he might pursue, more unsuspected, the satirical design of his writings.

Bac. Whate'er thou wilt; so 'tis not "How I'm loaded!"—

Beware of that. We've had too much of it.

Xanth. Something that's smart then?—

Bac. Not about thy load.

Xanth. Something that's quite ridiculous?—

Bac. Most freely;—

Be this alone, which I forbid, excepted.

Xanth. What's that, I pray?

Bac. Why, when thou shift'st thy staff,
I would not have thee talk so filthily.

Xanth. Not say, when lab'ring thus beneath my
burthen,

If no one help me I shall surely—

Bac. Hold,

I pray thee hold;—I do not want a vomit.

Xanth. Why bear I this, unless I play my part,
As Phrynicus, Lycis, and Amipsias¹

¹ *Phrynicus, Lycis, and Amipsias.* The works of the comic poets, before they were publicly performed at the times appointed for exhibiting comedies, were acted before certain judges appointed to decide upon their several merits. The piece, to which they gave the preference, was declared victorious, and performed with much pomp at the public expense: those were also acted, to which the judges assigned the second and even the third rank of merit. Aristophanes was victorious in this comedy; and at the same time Phrynicus gained the second honors. Amipsias had more than once carried off the prize, when Aristophanes was a competitor with him. This attack then upon his two cotemporaries and

Make those they bring thus loaded on the stage ?

Bac. Be sure thou dost not ; for such paltry tricks
Disgust me so, I never see them play'd,
But quit the place grown older by a twelvemonth.

Xanth. Thrice wretched me ! What, while this neck's
so crush'd,

Shall it not utter ev'n a single joke ?

Bac. What sauciness and delicate airs !—I,
Bacchus, the genuine offspring of a cask, ¹
Weary myself by trudging it on foot,
But mount this fellow, lest he feel fatigue
From walking, or from carrying his load.

Xanth. Do I not bear it ?

Bac. When thou art borne thyself ?

Xanth. Still I bear this.

Bac. How so ?

opponents we may impute to the enmity and ill-will generally subsisting between rivals, which this sort of public competition was particularly calculated to keep up. Lycis was probably a very inferior poet; and his name being joined with the other two, seems to be merely a satirical stroke on them, putting all three on a footing.

¹ *The genuine offspring of a cask.* I cannot find any authority for supposing, what the scholiast on our author's comedy of *Plutus*, v. 545. has observed with a reference to this passage, that Jupiter was called Στάμνιος. It seems rather to be a parody on some well-known line of one of the poets of that time, who had made Bacchus pompously describe himself as the son of Jupiter; in ridicule of which Aristophanes calls him "the son of a cask."

Xanth. Why, to' my sorrow.

Bac. Say, carries not thy ass whate'er thou bear'st ?¹

Xanth. Not so.—All this I bear ; not he, by Jove.

Bac. How can'st thou bear it, who thyself art borne ?

Xanth. I know not how ;—but still this shoulder aches.

Bac. Since then thy ass, thou own'st, does not assist thee,

Thou in thy turn ev'n carry him.

Xanth. Ah me !

Ah wretched me who was not at the sea-fight !²

Had I been there, e'er now I'd made thee howl.

Bac. Rascal ! dismount ; I'm almost at the door
Where I must stop. What, ho there ! boy, here boy !

¹ *Say carries not thy ass whate'er thou bear'st.* Silenus the common attendant of Bacchus is generally described riding on an ass. Xanthias is accordingly introduced here mounted in the same manner, to give the poet an opportunity for this string of *conceits* respecting the weight of the bundle ; whether it rests on the slave or his beast. This seems meant to ridicule some poet, whose custom it was to entertain the audience with such quibbling jokes.

² *Who was not at the sea-fight.* This comedy contains a piece of historical information not mentioned by the Greek historians, who have given an account of the engagement fought the year this comedy was exhibited, between the Athenian and Lacedæmonian fleets, off the Arginusian isles over against Lesbos ; upon which occasion the Athenians had fitted out their whole strength, and manned their fleet with slaves as well as freemen ; *namely*, that the slaves were encouraged to fight by a promise of being made free, if they returned victorious.

SCENE II.

HERCULES, BACCHUS, XANTHIAS.

Herc. Who thump'd the door? Some Centaur certainly
Has leap'd against it.¹—Answer me, who's there?

Bac. This hero——

Xanth. What of him?

Bac. Didst mind?

Xanth. Mind what?

Bac. How he fear'd me.

Xanth. Naught but thy folly truly.

Herc. By Ceres, I cannot refrain from laughing;—
'Twere vain to bite my lips:—I e'en must laugh.

Bac. My friend, thy hand! I come to ask a favor.

Herc. Nay, I must laugh to see the lion's skin
Hanging adown that saffron robe of thine.
What's now thy purpose? Why together meet
The club and buskin?² From what country com'st thou?

¹ ——— *Some Centaur certainly*
Has leap'd against it.

Hercules says this laughing at the appearance of Bacchus, whose person and disposition we are to suppose very unfit for the character he had assumed.

² ——— *To see the lion's skin*

Hanging adown that saffron robe of thine.

What's now thy purpose? Why together meet

The club and buskin?

Athenæus, b. 5. describes Bacchus as wearing the *λεόνευρος* or

Bac. I've been embark'd with Clisthenes.¹

Herc. Sail'dst thou
Against the enemy, and fought'st them?

Bac. Aye;—
And sunk a doz'n or thirteen of their ships.

Herc. You two?

Bac. Ev'n so.

Herc. "And just then I awak'd."²

Bac. On ship-board I was reading th' *Andromeda*,³
When unexpectedly a passion seiz'd me;—
Can'st guess how violent?

Herc. A passion say'st thou?

saffron robe, a garment worn by the Grecian women of condition. The buskins are taken notice of as a distinguishing part of his dress by Pausanias, b. 8. c. 31. in his account of a statue by the famous Polycletus, which he says he supposed to be a Bacchus, among other circumstances, from "its having buskins on the feet."

¹ *Clisthenes.* A man of an infamous character, most severely attacked in another part of this comedy.

² *And just then I awak'd.* This being the common manner of concluding the relation of a dream, it seems to have been used as a proverbial retort on all improbable narratives.

Kuster (whose appropriation of the dialogue I have almost always followed) assigns these words to Hercules on the authority of the Vatican MS. with which he collated this comedy. I confess myself tempted to give them to Xanthias, as they seem to be so exactly in the impertinent style of his character.

³ *Th' Andromeda.* One of the lost tragedies of Euripides.

Of what extent, I pray?

Bac. About the size

Of Milo.¹

Herc. For some girl or fair-fac'd boy?

Bac. Nay, brother, play not on me, for in truth
I'm ill at ease, this passion so torments me.

Herc. What passion, dearest brother?

Bac. I can't tell thee:—

I must unfold it enigmatically.²

Say, if thou e'er hast felt a sudden wish
For lentil porridge.³

Herc. Porridge? Many a time.

Bac. Dost comprehend? Shall I explain it further?

Herc. No more o' th' porridge; well I understand it.

Bac. Know then, that for Euripides I burn

With equal ardor.—

Herc. What tho' dead?

Bac. Ev'n so;—

¹ ——— *About the size*

Of Milo.

The scholiast suggests the reading Milo, instead of Molo as it stands in all the editions, and supposes it to mean the famous wrestler of that name, whose person, from the accounts we have of his great strength, we may well imagine to have been gigantic.

² *I must unfold it enigmatically.* Here seems to be an allusion to the figurative style of the tragic poets.

³ *Say, if thou e'er hast felt a sudden wish
For lentil porridge.*

Bacchus plays upon Hercules as being so voracious, that he had no idea of any desire, but that of hunger.

Nor amongst men is he who shall dissuade me
From going to him.

Herc. To the shades below?

Bac. Aye, or to lower shades.

Herc. With what design?

Bac. I want a clever poet.¹ We've none left :—
Our modern ones are wretched.²

Herc. How? I pray,
Is Jophon³ dead?

Bac. The only good one he
Remaining, if he's certainly a good one :—
But that's a question I am not so clear in.

Herc. But if to th' shades you go to seek a poet,
Say why not Sophocles, as he's the senior.

Bac. Not him by any means, unless indeed .
I could keep Jophon separate from him,
To try what he without his sire can do.
Besides, Euripides, a crafty fellow,
Will do his best to get away with me ;—
But Sophocles, as here, is there content.

Herc. Where's Agatho ?⁴

¹ *I want a clever poet.* Bacchus was supposed to be interested in the composition of tragedy, as his festivals were the principal occasions upon which tragedies were exhibited.

² ——— *We've none left,*

Our modern ones are wretched.

An application of a line out of the *Œneus* of Euripides.

³ *Jophon.* A tragic poet, the son of Sophocles, supposed to avail himself of his father's writings.

⁴ *Agatho.* A tragic poet, at whose house Plato has laid the scene of his *Symposium*.

Bac. He's gone away from me,
A worthy bard, the darling of his friends.

Herc. Poor fellow! where?

Bac. To th' banquet of the blest.¹

Herc. Where's Xenocles?²

Bac. I care not;—hang the dog!

Herc. Pythangelus?³

Xanth. Why talk you not of me?⁴
I'm sure this shoulder's bruised most horribly.

Herc. Say, are there not besides an endless tribe
Of beardless dramatists, who prate so fast,
They beat Euripides by many a mile?

Bac. Aye those young sprigs, that chatt'ring nest of
swallows,⁵

¹ *To th' banquet of the blest.* Perhaps Agatho was not dead at this time; and this may refer to his quitting Athens, and retiring to the court of Archelaus king of Macedonia, at that time the resort of the learned, who were there encouraged and protected.

² *Xenocles*,—³ *Pythangelus.* Wretched tragic poets of that time.

⁴ *Why talk you not of me?* The scholiast explains this as a reflexion on the poets just mentioned. But as these words are again repeated, it appears rather to be the impertinent interruption of the slave; who seems inclined to break through the prohibition in the first scene, and talk of his burthen.

⁵ *Nest of swallows.* The ancient Greeks were used to call all persons *swallows*, who did not speak their language with perfect purity. See Heath's note on the Agamemnon of Æschylus, v. 1059. Here it is meant figuratively, to represent these young poets as very barbarous ones.

Corrupters of true taste ; and wondrous vain,
 If by uncommon luck they chance to get
 A single play appointed for performance.¹
 But wheresoe'er we seek, we ne'er can find
 A bard endow'd with powers to produce
 Some work of genuine fancy.

Herc. How endow'd ?

Bac. Endow'd by nature with prolific powers
 To utter wild conceits and bold expressions,
 As "heav'n the house of Jove,"² "the foot of time,"³
 Or make distinction in a perjury
 Betwixt the tongue that swore, the mind that did not.⁴

¹ *Appointed for performance.* The public performances were under the direction of certain officers called *Χόρηγοι*, to whom the poets offered their works for inspection, and who appointed such as they approved of, for representation.

² *Heav'n the house of Jove.* This expression is exhibited by the scholiast in a line said by him to be taken from the *Melanippe* of Sophocles : but as Bergler well observes, the satire here is directed against Euripides, who we know wrote a tragedy of that name, from which it is most probable the verse is taken.

³ *The foot of time.* This expression occurs in the *Bacchanals* of Euripides, v. 889.

The gods thick mists around them spread,
 With art the ling'ring *foot of time* they hide,
 And to his haunt the sinner trace. WOODHULL.

⁴ *Betwixt the tongue that swore, the mind that did not.* Alluding to a well-known line in the *Hippolytus* of Euripides, v. 617.

Herc. Can such stuff please thee?

Bac. Aye to very madness.

Herc. 'Tis naught but fustian:—so, I ween, thou think'st it.

Bac. Rule not my thoughts;¹ thou'rt master of thine own.

Herc. Beyond a doubt 'tis very horrid nonsense.

Bac. In eating tutor me.

Xanth. No word of me?

Bac. But to the purpose, why I have assum'd
Thy garb and wear thy semblance.—Tell me, pray,
If I should want to take advantage of it,
Where wast thou hospitably lodg'd o' th' road,
When thou wast bound to hell for Cerberus?
Describe me too the harbors, baker's shops,
Bagnios, and inns, the openings, public fountains,
The roads, the towns, and taverns of repute
For neatest landladies.——

Xanth. No word of me?

Herc. What thou, thou wretch, dar'st thou accompany him?

Bac. No more of that—but tell me of the roads;
How I may quickest reach the shades below:
Nor hot, nor very cold be that thou show'st me.

—— although my tongue

Hath sworn, my soul is from the compact free.

WOODHULL.

¹ *Rule not my thoughts.* Supposed, by Bergler, to allude to a passage in the *Andromache* of Euripides, v. 582.

Herc. Which of them shall I first direct thee? Which?
There's one indeed is by the stool and halter;—
To hang thyself.

Bac. No more of that, I pray;
'Twould suffocate me.

Herc. Then there's a concise one,
And one that's often beaten—by the mortar.¹

Bac. Mean'st hemlock?

Herc. Certainly.

Bac. That's very wintry;
So deadly cold it numbs th' extremities.

Herc. A quick and most direct one shall I tell thee?

Bac. Ev'n so, by Jove, for I'm a sorry walker.

Herc. Crawl thou to the Ceramicus—²

¹ *By the mortar.* It seems that the expressed juice of the *κώνειον*, which was the common poison of the ancients, was drunk fresh from the herbs bruised in a mortar: and accordingly in the *Phædon* of Plato, where an account is given of the death of Socrates, when an inquiry is made if the poison was ready, the words are *εἰ τέτριπται*. The effect of it is there also described by a numbness gradually rising from the feet up to the bowels.

² *To the Ceramicus.* In a part of the suburbs so called was situated the academy, where the torch-race was held; the manner of which is thus described by Pausanias, b. i. c. xxx.

“In the academy is the altar of Prometheus, from whence they run towards the city carrying lighted torches, which their object is to keep lighted all the way they are to run. When the torch of the first runner is extinguished, he loses all chance of the victory; and a second takes his place. If

Bac. What there ?

Herc. Ascend the lofty tower—

Bac. For what purpose ?

Herc. Mark the delivery of the torch, and when
The people cry “ away,” leap—

Bac. Where ?

Herc. To the bottom.

Bac. So should I crush the brain’s two fig-leaves¹—No;
I’ll not go so.

Herc. How then ?

Bac. The way thou went’st.

Herc. That was by water chiefly ; for thou’lt come
Straight to a wide unfathomable lake.

Bac. How shall I pass it ?

his torch also is extinguished, there is a third who makes the trial. If they all fail, the victory is not adjudged to either.”

Such is the account Pausanias gives of the torch-race, which seems to have been that which was held at the *Ἡφαιστεία*, a festival in honor of Vulcan. The race with torches is also mentioned in the fourth act of this comedy, as being part of the games celebrated at the *Παναθηναῖα*, or festival of Minerva ; though it seems from the word *ὑπολειπόμενος*, which is there used in speaking of a very clumsy runner, that, upon that occasion, they ran more than one at a time.

¹ *The brain’s two fig-leaves.* The Athenians used to serve up to their tables the brains of animals wrapped up in fig-leaves : in allusion to which custom Aristophanes calls the two membranes, which inclose the brain, and which are known by the names of *pia mater* and *dura mater*, the two fig-leaves of the brain.

Herc. An old ferryman
Will row thee over in a little skiff,
And take two obols of thee for his fare.¹

Bac. What can't two obols do in either world !—
How got you thither ?

Herc. Theseus led the way.²
There thou wilt see innumerable serpents
And beasts of form tremendous.

Bac. Scare me not :—
In vain thou striv'st to fright me from my purpose.

Herc. There a vast heap of filth and floating dung ;—
Rolling in this whoe'er has wrong'd the stranger,³

¹ *Two obols of thee for his fare.* It was usual with the Athenians to put a piece of money into the mouth of every corpse before interment ; which was thought to be Charon's fee for wafting the departed soul over the infernal river. Aristophanes makes this two obols, in allusion to its being what the citizens received for attending the courts of law, for which paltry fee it seems they showed no small earnestness.

² *Theseus led the way.* Bishop Warburton explains all these descents into the shades, described by the poets, as so many initiations. These words of the comic poet may be similarly illustrated by a passage in Plutarch's life of Theseus, where it is said *μυῆσιν Ἡρακλεῖ γενέσθαι, Θησέως σπουδασαντος.*

³ *Rolling in this whoe'er has wrong'd the stranger, &c.* A palpable allusion to a passage in the *Furies* of Æschylus, v. 250.

———— there see whatever mortal
Dar'd an injurious deed, profan'd the gods.

Has brib'd a youth to yield to his vile passion,
 And yet withheld the price of prostitution ;
 Whoe'er his mother has abus'd, or smote
 His father's cheek ; whoe'er himself has perjur'd,
 Or e'er transcrib'd a line of Morsimus.¹

Bac. And sure with justice we may add to these,
 Whoe'er has learn'd the Pyrrhic of Cinesias.²

Herc. Onward the dulcet harmony of flutes
 Shall breathe around thee, while thou shalt behold
 Light's gayest beams, such as we here enjoy,³

Attack'd with ruffian violence the stranger,
 Each with vindictive pains condemn'd to groan
 His crimes requiting. POTTER.

¹ *Morsimus.* A wretched tragic poet satirised in several other of our author's comedies.

² *Pyrrhic of Cinesias.* The Pyrrhic dance seems to have been danced with many ridiculous motions, if we may judge by the following quotation, which Suidas gives us, from Babrius, an old author of fables :

———— ἐμοὶ γένοιτο καὶ ὁδῶ βαίνειν
 Μὴ καταγέλαστον, μήτε πυρρίχην παίζειν.

“ May I walk along the road not in a ridiculous manner, nor like a performer of the Pyrrhic dance ? ”

Cinesias was a dithyrambic poet famous for dancing this dance, said to be so named ὅτι ἐν τοῖς χοροῖς πολλῇ κίνησει ἔχρηστο. In our author's comedy of the Birds he is called κυκλιοδιδάσκαλος, a conductor of choruses.

³ *Light's gayest beams, such as we here enjoy.*

Largior hic campos æther et lumine vestit
 Purpureo ; solemque suum, sua sidera nôrunt.

VIRG. ÆN. 6. 640.

And myrtle groves, and troops of either sex
Moving in mystic choruses, and marking
With plausible hands their holy ecstasy.

Bac. And who are they?

Herc. The initiated.¹

Xanth. And I'm the ass that bears the mysteries;²—
Which I'll not bear, by Jove, a moment longer.

Herc. They'll tell thee all which thou may'st wish to
know ;

For near the way that leads to Pluto's gate
Their station lies.—Brother, success attend thee.

Bac. And health be thine.—Again take up thy pack.

Xanth. Before I've laid it down ?

Bac. This very instant.

Xanth. Not so ;—but I beseech thee that thou hire
Some corpse, that's thither bound, to carry it.

Here heav'n expands a loftier canopy,
The plains are vested with a purple sky ;
Here their own sun they see diffuse its light,
And their accustom'd stars illume the night.

¹ *The initiated.* All persons initiated in the Eleusinian mysteries were thought not only to partake of greater happiness and security in this life, but after death too they enjoyed, as was believed, greater degrees of felicity than others, and were honored with the first place in the Elysian Fields. Diogen. Laert. b. vi. 39.

² *I'm the ass that bears the mysteries.* It was customary, at the Eleusinian mysteries, to have what was wanted in those rites carried upon asses.

Bac. Suppose I find none—

Xanth. I must bear't myself.

Bac. Well thought of ;—here they bring a funeral.

SCENE III.

BACCHUS, XANTHIAS, DEAD MAN.¹

Bac. What ho ! I speak to thee, to thee, dead man !
Wilt take this bundle with thee to the shades ?

Dead M. How big is't ?

Bac. Thus.

Dead M. I'll take it for two drachmas.²

Bac. Aye and for less, by Jupiter !

Dead M. Make room then.

Bac. Stop, honest man, and let us strike a bargain.—
me.

Dead M. Give me two drachmas, make no words with

Bac. Here ; take nine obols.—

Dead M. No ;—I'd come to life first.³

¹ *Dead Man.* It seems surprising, that neither the scholiast, nor commentators, have suggested any reason for the introduction of this very singular *dramatis persona* : it certainly has a satirical meaning, and was probably intended to ridicule some circumstance in one or other of the dramatic performances.

² *Two drachmas.* A drachma, which was equal to sevenpence three farthings of our money, contained six obols.

³ *I'd come to life first.* This is an allusion to a common way people have of affirming their determination not to do any thing at the risk of their lives, " I would die first."

Xanth. A pompous rascal ! Won't he pay for't ?—Well !
I'll e'en proceed and carry it myself.

Bac. Thou art in truth a brave and honest fellow—
Now for the boat.

SCENE IV.

CHARON, BACCHUS, XANTHIAS.

Char. Away ! push to the shore.

Bac. What's here ?

Xanth. By Jove, the very lake he talked of :
Aye, and by Neptune, here I see the boat ;—
Here's Charon too himself.

Bac. Good cheer, good Charon !¹

Char. Who is there here that flies from busy care
To th' happier realms of peace ? For Lethe's plain
Who's bound ? Who sails in search of asses' wool ?²

¹ *Good cheer, good Charon.* This χαῖρε' ὦ Χάρων (which is a sort of play upon words the comic poet has often introduced, and with which the audience were probably much entertained,) is in the Greek repeated three times ; either because it was customary to address the dead with threefold repetitions, or as being the separate salutations of Charon from Bacchus, Xanthias, and the dead man, who may be supposed to be also upon the bank waiting for the boat.

² *Asses' wool.* A proverbial expression applied to those who deceive themselves with the expectation of meeting with what does not exist.

To the Cerberians,¹ or the ravens² who?—
And who for Tænarus?³

¹ *To the Cerberians.* Pliny mentions that Cimmerium, one of the cities in the entrance of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, had before been called Cerberion; and in the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*, where Homer brings Ulysses to the country of the Cimmerians, the scholiast suggests *Κερβερίων*, instead of *Κιμμερίων*, as the emendation of Crates the corrector of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

Aristophanes seems to have made the infernal boatman offer this voyage to the choice of his passengers, in allusion to Homer's description of that country.—*Odys.* II. v. 14.

“There in a lonely land and gloomy cells
The dusky nation of Cimmeria dwells;
The sun ne'er views th' uncomfortable seats
When radiant he advances or retreats:
Unhappy race! whom endless night invades,
Clouds the dull air, and wraps them round in shades.”

POPE.

² *The ravens.* Some commentators have supposed this to be a desert place where criminals were banished, or some pit or precipice where they were thrown down headlong. But it is explained by C. Gerard, in his notes on the “*Plutus*” of our author, as being a proverbial expression taken from the bodies of criminals being gibbeted after execution. So Horace,

“Non pascas in cruce corvos.”—*Lib.* I. *Ep.* 16.

³ *Tænarus.* A promontory of Peloponnesus, fabled to be the entrance into the infernal regions.

Bac. I.

Char. Haste on board then.

Bac. Where sail'st thou?—Really to th' ravens?

Char. Aye,

If it please thee : but prithee come on board.

Bac. Come Xanthias—

Char. No. I carry not thy slave

Unless he was of those, who fought at sea

For th' property of their own carcasses.¹

Xanth. Not I. I happened then to have sore eyes.

Char. Run round the lake then.

Xanth. Where shall I await you?

“Tænarias etiam fauces, alta ostia Ditis.” VIRG. *G.* 4.

“Thro’ Tænarus’ jaws, and those high gates that lead

“To the abode of him, who rules the dead.”

¹ ————— *Who fought at sea*

For the property of their own carcasses.

The words *περὶ τῶν κρεῶν* have been a subject of much discussion; and emendations have been sought for to clear up the supposed difficulty. I have adopted what I conceive to be the idea of the scholiast, who says that the slaves in this engagement, which was that of the Arginusian isles, fought οὐ περὶ χρημάτων καὶ πατρίδος, ἀλλὰ περὶ τοῦ ἰδίου σώματος, “not for plunder, or the good of their country, but for the property of their own bodies;” i. e. *freedom*. The bodies of slaves were the property of their masters, but it seems these were promised, if they behaved well in that engagement, to be advanced to the full enjoyment of their liberty. Suidas, on the word *κρέας*, says, οὕτω καλοῦσι τὸ σῶμα οἱ Ἄττικοι.

Char. Why, at *Avænus'* stone;¹—'tis near the ale-house;
Dost know it?

Xanth. Perfectly.—Ah wretched me!—
I've stumbled on a surly fellow here!

Char. Sit to thy oar.—Any more passengers?—
Why what art doing?

Bac. Doing? on my oar
Ev'n sitting as thou bad'st me.²

Char. Here, Sir Guts,
Can'st not sit here?

Bac. What so?

Char. Nay, wilt thou not
Put forth thy arms and stretch them out?

Bac. What so?

Char. Nay trifle not, but resting thus thy feet
Row stoutly.

Bac. How?—No *Salaminian I*,³
Nor us'd to th' sea, how am I skill'd to row?

¹ *Avænus' stone.* The scholiast mentions, that at Athens was a place, known by the name of *Αὔαιρου λίθος*. It seems also to have been a name given to any place, where one person appointed to meet another might be to wait a considerable time, and refers, as Kuster observes, to a common saying among the Athenians, *Αἶος γέγονα προσδόνων*, "I am quite worn out with waiting."

² —————on my oar

Ev'n sitting as thou bad'st me.

Charon, in his waterman's language, had bid Bacchus assist him with rowing, "sit to thy oar;" which Bacchus misunderstanding, puts his oar across the boat and sits upon it.

³ *No Salaminian I.* Salamis was an island of the *Ægean*

Char. There's nothing easier.—Put in thy oar :—
Thou'lt hear sweet music presently.

Bac. What music ?

Char. Of frogs with voices wonderful as swans.

Bac. Do thou then give the word.

Char. Away ! Away !

SCENE V.

CHORUS of FROGS,¹ BACCHUS, CHARON.

Chor. From this our native lake to thee²
Let us our choral homage pay,

sea between Attica and Peloponnesus, near which the fleet of Xerxes was defeated by Themistocles. Bacchus says, as an excuse for not knowing how to row, that he was not a native of Salamis, the inhabitants of which place might be supposed to be mostly sailors.

¹ *Chorus of Frogs.* This Chorus, which, though it appears only in this scene, gives the name to the piece, seems to be an allegorical satire leveled at the tragic poets ; the ode they sing is probably a parody on some parts of their pieces then well known.

² *From this our native lake.* At Limna in Attica was a temple of Bacchus, where one of his most considerable festivals was held—*Λιμναῖα τέσσα* then is an equivocal expression ; and when these frogs speak of celebrating the praise of Bacchus at festivals held on the bank of their lake, *ἐν Λίμνασι* means literally at Limnæ, where tragedies were exhibited in honor of his feast.

And pour our votive eulogy
 In tuneful croaks and vocal lay ;
 Croaks, which we oft have sung before
 In praise of Bacchus, son of Jove,
 What time his vot'ries revell'd on our shore,
 And sought in frantic mood our hallow'd grove ;
 Croak, Croak, Croak,
 Croak, Croak, Croak !

Bac. Truly my back begins to ache.

Chor. Croak, Croak !

Bac. That naught, I ween, affects you.

Chor. Croak, Croak, Croak !

Bac. Destruction seize you. Naught but croak, croak,
 croak ?

Chor. Notes can we sing more sweet than these,
 Advent'rer bold, to charm thine ear ?
 For these the tuneful Muses please,
 And Pan the piper joys to hear,
 Apollo too admires our song,
 The god who rules th' harmonious choir,
 Pleas'd that we sport his favor'd reeds among,
 Whose aid the bard demands to strike his lyre.*
 Croak, Croak, &c.

Bac. Why I'm all over blister'd, and so gall'd
 I cannot stoop without a croak, croak, croak ;
 Cease then your song, melodious songsters, cease.

Chor. Chant we in bolder notes the lay,
 Such as in joyous croaks we sing,

* *Whose aid the bard demands to strike his lyre.* Hesychius, who explains the word δῶνακα by ὑπολύριον, mentions, that the strings of the lyre were at first supported by reeds.

When on the sedgy bank we play,
 And frolic in the genial spring;
 Or as, when rising tempests sweep
 At Jove's command along the sky,
 Together from the wat'ry deep
 We pour the rumbling harmony;
 Croak, Croak, &c.

Bac. From you I catch the song.

Chor. Then ill awaits us.

Bac. More ill for me to break my back with rowing.

Chor. Croak, Croak!

Bac. Croak stoutly. It affects not me.

Chor. To charm thee still we'll strain our throats,
 Our pow'r unwearied try,
 While day shall last we'll pour our notes,
 And croak incessant melody.
 Croak, Croak, &c.

Bac. You shall not conquer me at this sport truly.

Chor. Nor shalt thou us.

Bac. To you I'll never yield.

No;—rather will I croak the whole day through,¹
 Until I can surpass you.

Chor. Croak, croak, croak!

Bac. I thought at last that I should stop your croaking.

Chor. Enough, enough!—Now push the boat to shore.
 Step out, and pay the fare.

Bac. Here, take thy obols.

¹ *No rather will I croak the whole day through.* To understand Bacchus's method of croaking, I must refer the reader to Bergler's note on the word ἐγκύψας. v. 240.

SCENE VI.

BACCHUS, XANTHIAS, *a* PRIEST.*Bac.* Why Xanthias, Xanthias; ho there Xanthias!*Xanth.* Here.*Bac.* Come hither.*Xanth.* 'Thou art welcome over, Master!*Bac.* What have we here?*Xanth.* Darkness and mud.*Bac.* Hast seen

Aught of the parricides and perjurers,

Whom we were told of?

Xanth. Dost not see them there?¹*Bac.* By Neptune that I do.—What's to be done?*Xanth.* 'Twere best advance, for here's the very place
Where the wild beasts, he talk'd of, may be met with.*Bac.* Hang him, a rascal!—That was all a lie,
Studiously fram'd to frighten me, because
He knows me valiant.—Well this Hercules
Is sure a mighty braggart—I could wish
T'encounter one of his wild beasts: the victory
Would do some credit to our expedition.*Xanth.* Without a doubt. Sure I hear somewhat
rattling.

¹ *Dost not see them there?* This, it is observed by the scholiast, was said pointing to particular persons among the audience, and is that sort of satirical wit, with which the old comedy abounded.

Bac. Where is it? Where?

Xanth. Behind us.

Bac. Fall thee back.

Xanth. Nay there it is before us.

Bac. Take the lead.

Xanth. By Jove I see it now ;—a wondrous monster!

Bac. What's its appearance?

Xanth. A most horrid one,

And one that's always changing—now an ox,—

Now 'tis a mule, and now a lovely woman.

Bac. Where is she? Come! I will address me to her.

Xanth. No more a woman, it is now a dog—

Bac. 'Tis certainly the spectre.¹

Xanth. There ;—its face

Is all a blazing fire ;—one leg's of brass—

Bac. By Neptune aye, and t'other is of dung.

Xanth. 'Tis even so.—

Bac. O where shall I betake me?

Xanth. And whither I?

Bac. Protect me, priest, that we

Together may carouse—

Priest. Great Hercules!

Destruction waits us.

¹ *The spectre.* In the sixth book of Virgil, Æneas on his first entrance into the shades, meets with the “*terribiles visu formæ*” and the “*variarum monstra ferarum*” which Bp. Warburton, who considers all these descents as so many initiations, explains by the imaginary terrors of the mysteries, and the phantoms exhibited in the probationary trials of those who were going to be initiated.

Bac. I intreat thee, man,
Thou call not on me, nor betray my name.

Priest. O Bacchus then!—

Bac. That less than t'other.

Xanth. Hist!—

Where goest thou, Master? Stay thee here.

Bac. What now?

Xanth. Be of good cheer; the prospect brightens
round us.

And with Hegelochus I now may say,
“I see a weasel rising from the storm.”¹

The spectre's vanish'd.

Bac. Wilt thou swear it is?

Xanth. By Jove!

Bac. Repeat thy oath.

Xanth. By Jove!

Bac. Again.

Xanth. By Jove it is.

Bac. Ah me! When I beheld it
I look'd a little pale; but this poor fellow,
More terrified than me, was red as fire.—
Whence come these evils on me? To the malice
Of which of all the gods shall I impute them?

Xanth. To “Heav'n, Jove's house,” or to “the foot of
time.”

¹ *I see a weasel rising from the storm.* This is a verse in the “*Orestes*” of Euripides, v. 279. which has often been played upon. The Greek words, which signify “I see all calm,” if not correctly pronounced, might be understood to mean “I see a weasel.” Hegelochus the actor here mentioned was probably not very distinct in his pronunciation.

(The sound of flutes is heard within.)

Bac. Hark!—

Xanth. Where?

Bac. Heard'st nothing?

Xanth. What?

Bac. The breath of flutes.

Xanth. I hear it, and a certain smell of torches
Bespeaks th' approach of the initiated.—
Here keep we close and with attention mark them.

SCENE VII.

*Chorus of the Initiated,*¹ XANTHIAS, BACCHUS.

Chor. Iacchus hail!—

Xanth. These are th' initiated

¹ *Chorus of the Initiated.* The Eleusinian mysteries, the most celebrated and mysterious solemnity of any in Greece, were so named from their being held at Eleusis, a borough town in Attica, in honor of the goddess Ceres and her daughter Proserpine. The substance of the celebration, as Bp. Warburton observes, seems to have been a kind of drama of the history of Ceres. The festival began upon the fifteenth day of the month Boedromion, and lasted nine days. This interlude represents the sixth day of the mysteries, the ceremony of which is thus described by Abp. Potter in his *Grecian Antiquities*.

“The sixth day was called *Ἰακχῶς* from Iacchus, the son of Jupiter and Ceres, who accompanied the goddess in her search after Proserpine with a torch in his hand: whence it

Who now perform, as Hercules related,
 Their sportive rites, and to Iacchus chant,
 As erst Diagoras,¹ the votive song.

is that his statue held a torch. This statue was carried from the Ceramicus to Eleusis in a solemn procession, called after the hero's name Ἰακχῶς. The statue and the persons that accompanied it had their heads crowned with myrtle: these were named Ἰακχογῳγοὶ, and all the way danced and sung, and beat brazen kettles. The way by which they issued out of the city was called Ἰερά ὁδός, i. e. *the sacred way*: the resting place Ἰερά συκῆ, from a *fig-tree*, which grew there, and (like all other things concerned in this solemnity) was accounted *sacred*. It was also customary to rest upon a bridge, built over the river *Cephissus*, where they made themselves merry by jesting on those that passed by; whence γεφυρίζων being derived from γέφυρα, i. e. *a bridge*, is by Suidas expounded χλευάζων, i. e. *mocking* or *jeering*; and γεφυρισταὶ are by Hesychius interpreted σκῶπται, i. e. *scoffers*. Having passed this bridge, they went to Eleusis, the way into which was called Μυστικὴ εἴσοδος, i. e. *the Mystical entrance*."

This account will enable us more fully to understand the process of this very poetical interlude, which opens with the Ἰακχογῳγοὶ surrounding the temple of Ceres, where the statue of Bacchus was kept (see Pausanias, book I. c. 2.) and invoking the god to quit the temple, and proceed with them to Eleusis.

¹ *As erst Diagoras.* The scholiast mentions a dithyrambic poet of that name, who composed hymns to Bacchus wherein the words Ἰακχῆ ὦ Ἰακχῆ were very frequently repeated. I see no reason to suppose it to have an ironical

Bac. 'Tis surely so. 'Twere best keep strictest silence :—

So shall we clearly see whate'er they do.

Chor. Iacchus¹ hail ! thou pow'r divine,
 That dwell'st within this hallow'd fane !
 Leave, leave awhile thy sacred shrine,
 And deign to lead thy votive train
 In frolic movements o'er the verdant plain !
 Come with thy blooming myrtle wreath,
 Which graceful nods around thy brow,
 And to the music's tuneful breath
 Mark thou the time on bounding toe :
 With thee bid every grace advance²
 In measures unconfin'd and free,
 And consecrate the mystic dance
 With holiness and purity !

allusion to the sneers and insults cast upon the mysteries, and those who celebrated them, by Diagoras the Melian.

¹ *Iacchus.* Iacchus was the name by which Bacchus was distinguished in the mysteries. Strabo, book x. p. 468. *Ἰακχῶς* is properly the hymn to Bacchus, derived either from *ἰὼ Βάκχε*, or from *ἱακῆ*, *ἱαχῆ*, or *ἱακχέω*, because it was sung with much vociferation. Kuster in his note upon the word in Suidas, refers to this ode of Aristophanes as a specimen of the *Ἰακχῶς*.

² *With thee bid every grace advance.* The Graces have been called the daughters of Bacchus and Venus, which Madame Dacier supposes to have been suggested by that line of Anacreon in his 41st ode,

Δὶ δὲν ἡ Χάρις ἐτέχθη.

Xanth. Daughter of Ceres, honor'd and rever'd!
The pork smells wondrous sav'ry.¹

Bac. Thou'lt be quiet,
When thou hast had a bit of chitterling.

Chor. Aloft, aloft thy torches rear

Wide blazing to the skies!

Thou com'st, thou com'st,² the evening star

That gild'st our nightly mysteries;

Before thee o'er th' illumin'd mead

I see thy genial influence spread,

The stiffen'd knee of age again

Grows supple and forgets its pain,

Disease and care before thee fly,

And all is youth and ecstasy.

On then, thou bearer of the torch, proceed,

Thy votive youths, divine conductor, lead

To the gay mead where blooms each od'rous flow'r,

And form the sports which crown this sacred hour.

EPIRRHEMA.³

Semichorus. Hush'd be each lawless tongue, and ye
profane,

¹ *The pork smells wondrous sav'ry.* The candidates for initiation first sacrificed a sow to Ceres.

² *Thou com'st, thou com'st.* Here we may suppose the statue of Iacchus was exhibited.

³ *Epirrhema.* In this address, which is supposed to be spoken by the ἡγεμόνων, or 'leader of the initiated,' to warn off the profane from approaching the procession; occasion is taken to introduce many satirical allusions to particular persons.

Ye uninitiated, from our mysteries
 Far off retire!—Whoe'er a bosom boasts not
 Pure and unsullied, nor has ever learn'd
 To worship at the Muses' hallow'd shrine,
 Or lead in sportive dance their votaries,
 Nor in Cratinus' lofty sounding style
 Has form'd his tongue to Bacchus' praise;—whoe'er
 Delights in flattery's unseen language;—
 Who strives not to allay the rising storm
 That threatens the public weal, nor cultivates
 The sweets of private friendship, but foment
 Intestine discord, blows the ranc'rous flame
 Of enmity 'twixt man and man, to serve
 Some sordid purpose of his narrow soul;—
 Whoe'er, intrusted with the government
 Of a divided city, by corruption
 Is led away from th' even path of justice;—
 Whoe'er betrays the fortress he commands,
 Gives up his ship, or from Egina sends
 Forbidden stores, as late that vile collector,
 Shameless Thorycio¹ did to Epidaurus;—

¹ *Thorycio*. Thorycio is described by the scholiast as being an Athenian *ταξίαρχος*, or 'captain of a hundred men,' in the Peloponnesian war; who held a correspondence with the enemy, whom he supplied with stores from the island of Egina, then in the hands of the Athenians. He does not appear really to have been a collector of any duties; but the word *εικοστολόγος* is only applied to him as a term of reproach. Constantine explains it as referring to the tyrannical and overbearing behavior of tax-gatherers. Pollux

Whoe'er persuades another to supply
 The enemy with money for their fleet,¹
 Or rudely treats the bust of Hecate,²
 While he pretends to join her votive hymn,
 Or when retain'd the poet's advocate,
 Gorges his fee in fell revenge, 'cause once
 At Bacchus' feast they on the stage expos'd him;—
 All such forbid I to approach our festival;—
 Away all such! away! away I charge you!

seems to consider the εἰκοστολόγος as one of the lower order of tax-gatherers. May we not suppose these to have been very liable to have been seduced from their duty by bribery, and that in this respect the description is applied to Thorycio?

¹ *Whoe'er persuades another to supply
 The enemy with money for their fleet.*

It is mentioned by Diodorus Siculus, that Cyrus, the son of Darius, on the application of Lysander, assisted the Lacedæmonians with a sum of money to pay their forces.

² *The bust of Hecate.* The person here alluded to, is said by the scholiast to have been the same Cinesias already mentioned.

It was customary at Athens every new moon to have a supper provided at the expense of the rich for the goddess Hecate. This was offered to one of her statues, which were erected where three ways met; when the poor people carried it all off, giving out that Hecate had devoured it.—Possibly this supper was presented to the goddess with some sort of choral procession, in which Cinesias attended either as a conductor or performer, and being a man of an infamous character, behaved with much indecency.

Now raise your tuneful voices and begin
Those nightly sports, which crown our mysteries.

Semichorus. Haste we to the flow'ry mead,

There the choral dance to lead ;

There let playful sport go round

Jest and pointed joke abound.

Cease the plenteous feast ; advance,

Form ye now the mystic dance ;

To our guardian goddess' praise,

Grateful songs of triumph raise ;

She has sworn to guard our state

From Thorycio's baneful hate.

Chorus. The measure cease, and change the strain

To loftier notes and grander lay,

To her who spreads the fruitful plain,

To Ceres, bounteous goddess, homage pay.

Semichorus. Queen of our holy rights, O Ceres, hear,

To us, thy vot'ries, lend a fav'ring ear,

Accept the hallow'd strain we raise to thee,

And smile auspicious on our minstrelsy.

By thee protected, ever blithe and gay,

Give we to frolic dance this sacred day.

Nor yet thy laughter-loving sports among

Forget we, goddess, thy more serious song ;

But, while we mark each impious wretch with scorn,

With myrtle wreaths the victor's brows adorn.

Chor. Again your invocations raise,

Let the votive song aspire ;

The genial god demands our lays,

Who deigns to lead with us the sportive choir.

Semichorus. Iacchus hail! to whom we owe
 The joys of festive harmony;
 Say, wilt thou deign with us to go,¹
 While to the goddess we our duty pay?
 Naught that's unseemly shall attend on thee,
 Nor aught but pleasure strew thy easy way.

O come then, leader of the dance,
 With us in sportive mood advance.
 All pride of dress 'tis thine to scorn,
 Why should we then ourselves adorn?
 This tatter'd cloak² thou bad'st us tear,
 This poor and humble sock we wear,
 Thus more at ease with sport and play
 To celebrate this hallow'd day.

O come then, leader of the dance,
 With us in sportive mood advance.
 In bloom of rip'ning youth array'd
 Just now I spied a lovely maid;
 Graceful her air, her op'ning vest
 Betray'd her gently-swelling breast;
 Who could her ev'ry beauty see,
 Nor deem her worthy love and thee?
 O come then, leader of the dance,
 With us in sportive mood advance.

Xanth. Aye truly, that I will most readily;
 And lead the dance with her.

¹ *Say, wilt thou deign with us to go.* Here the statue of Iacchus was probably brought out, and the procession began to move.

² *This tatter'd cloak.* This is understood to allude to an economical reform in the representations of comedies at the festivals of Bacchus suggested by Cinesias.

Bac. Aye; so would I.

Chor. Shall we unite our common song¹

To lash this shameless foreigner,

This Archedemus, who so long

(No member of our city he)

Our city's rule pretends to share,

And bears the palm of infamy?

Or rather shall we now relate,

In shocking and unseemly ways,

How for his foul associate's fate

Vile Clisthenes his grief displays?

Or Callias hold to public view,

Marking with scorn and censure due

The wretch, who joys his father to outvie

In pomp of vice and horrid notoriety?

Bac. Inform us if you know where Pluto dwells,
For we are strangers newly here arriv'd.

Chor. Further to go, or further to inquire
Were needless.—Yonder is the very door.

Bac. Sirrah! take up thy pack.

Xanth. Why what contains it?

Pray have we got Jove's Corinth² in the blanket?

¹ *Shall we unite our common song.* Aristophanes takes occasion here from the jokes, which were used to be passed while the procession rested on the bridge, to give vent to his general disposition for satire; but he does it in such terms, that it is impossible to translate him closely in this chorus.

Xenophon mentions Archedemus, as taking a lead in the affairs of Athens, and being at that time Governor of Decelia.

² *Jove's Corinth.* A name the Corinthians affected to give

Chor. Now the sacred circle lead
 To the grove with flow'rs bespread,
 Ye our Goddess' rites who share !

Bac. I'll too join your virgin train,
 And beneath night's sable reign,
 While you frolic o'er the plain,
 High the sacred torch will bear.

STROPHE.

Chor. To the meads with roses gay,
 To the flow'ry meads, away !
 There in frolic mood advance ;
 Form we there our sportive dance,
 Which to crown this hallow'd eve
 Lightly we are wont to weave,
 Which th' indulgent fates restore
 Partial to this sacred hour.

ANTISTROPHE.

Cloudless his auspicious rays
 Sol to us alone displays,
 Who from foul contagion free
 Give our lives to purity.

their city, which they frequently repeated with much haughtiness and insolence in their altercations with their neighbors the Megareans, whom they affected to keep in subjection, but who afterwards went to war with them, defeated them, and threatened to destroy Jove's Corinth. It seems to have been used proverbially, and to have been applied to things of a trifling nature which people treated as matters of great importance, and about which they were perpetually talking.

No contracted thoughts we know,
 Fraught with gen'ral love we glow,
 And to all alike dispense
 Unconfin'd benevolence. ¹

ACT II. SCENE I.

BACCHUS, XANTHIAS, ÆACUS.

Bac. NOW in what manner shall I knock at th' door?—
 How knock the people in this country?

Xanth. Pray
 Don't break it down, but lightly touch the door,²
 Now Hercules's form and strength are thine.

Bac. Ho! Boy!

Æac. Who's there?³

Bac. The mighty Hercules.

Æac. Ah villain, shameless ruffian, is it thou,
 Of all abandon'd wretches most abandon'd,
 That stol'st away our mastiff Cerberus,

¹ *Unconfin'd benevolence.* The Athenians were remarkable for their hospitality and liberality towards strangers; to whom their city was always open.

² *But lightly touch the door.* In the Greek Ἀλλὰ γεῦσαι τῆς θύρας. "But taste the door."—So in Shakespear's "Twelfth-night" Sir Toby says to Viola, "Taste your legs," which is said in ridicule of the effeminate appearance of Viola, and means "to use lightly, or delicately."

³ *Who's there?* Lucian describes Æacus as Pluto's porter. Vide Dialog. Menip. Æac. L. 20. Ed. Ritz.

Throttling him first, then carrying him off,
 The object of my constant care ?—But now
 We have thee safe :—the sable-hearted rocks
 Of Styx, ¹ and Acheron's blood-streaming heights,
 Surround thee, with Cocytus' watchful dogs ;—
 Then there's the hundred-headed Hydra ;—she
 Shall rend thy bowels, while thy lungs shall feed
 Tartessus' serpent, ² and thy bleeding reins
 Tithrasian Gorgons ³ shall in pieces tear.—

¹———*The sable-hearted rocks*
Of Styx.

This and the seven following lines are in the original composed in a very pompous sounding style, to produce the effect of terror in Bacchus, which I have endeavored to convey to the reader as decently as possible.

² *Tartessus' serpent.* Under one of Hercules's pillars stood an ancient city called Tartessus, afterwards Carteia. Hence Claudian's "*Tartessia tigris.*" Nupt. Honor. Mari. 161.

³ *Tithrasian Gorgons.* The story of Hercules's robbing the orchards of the Hesperides in spite of the dragon is well known. It appears from Wells's Dionysius, L. 1397, that the Gorgades, mentioned by Pliny and Pomponius Mela as the habitation of the Gorgons, were also known by the name of the Hesperides.

Here then are allusions to the different parts of Hercules's history : and the supposed Hercules is threatened in hell with his old acquaintances upon earth.

Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeras dire.

Tithrasius is said by one of the scholiasts to have been a part of Libya ; by another, Aristophanes, is supposed to reflect upon

I haste to set them on.

Xanth. Ah ! what hast done ?

Bac. Oh me ! invoke the Deity's assistance.

Xanth. Ridiculous wretch ! get up, lest any come
And see thee thus.

Bac. I faint.—Unto my heart
Put thou some sponge. ¹

Xanth. Here.—

Bac. Nay ; apply it for me.

Xanth. Where is it ?—Gods of gold ! is thy heart
there ?

Bac. Downwards it crept through fear.

Xanth. Of Gods and men
Thou vilest coward !

Bac. I ? A coward truly ?
When instantly I called to thee for sponge ?—
No one besides had done't.

Xanth. What else, I pray,
Had any other done ?

Bac. Had lain and stunk,—
Were he a coward. I got up ; nay more,—
I wip'd myself.

Xanth. By Neptune ! bravely done.

Bac. Beyond a doubt. But wast not thou alarm'd

the inhabitants of Titliras, one of the little boroughs of Attica,
by making the Gorgons natives of that place.

¹ *Put thou some sponge.* Sponge was used commonly by
the ancients as a vehicle to administer liquids of all kinds;—
of course medicinal applications.

To hear his sounding words and threats ?

Xanth. Not I ;

By Jove, I car'd not for them.

Bac. Since thou art

So bold and manly, personate thou me,

Taking this club and skin,—if in good truth

Thou art so very fearless :—I the while

Will, in my turn, the baggage bear for thee.

Xanth. Take it directly :—I must be obedient.¹

Now turn thine eyes upon Herculean Xanthias ;

Mark if he'll fear, or wear a heart like thine.

Bac. Nay, thou'rt that very rogue of Melita.²

Lead on then ;—I must be the pack-horse now.

SCENE II.

MAID-SERVANT of PROSERPINE, BACCHUS,
XANTHIAS.

M. S. Welcome, dear Hercules ! Walk in, I pray.

Soon as the goddess heard of thy arrival,

She straightway bak'd new bread, put on her pots

With herbs and pulse for porridge, on the fire

¹ *I must be obedient.* When Shakespear in his "Taming of the Shrew" makes the master and servant exchange dresses, Tranio says,

"In brief, good Sir, sith it your pleasure is,
And I am tied to be obedient."

² *Thou'rt that very rogue of Melita.* Hercules had a temple there.

Laid a whole ox, and made most curious cheese-cakes.
So pray walk in.

Xanth. Thou'rt very kind.

M. S. By Pol,
I must not suffer thee to go away,
When now her birds are drest, and her desert
Nicely set out, her richest wines diluted
On purpose for thee.—Nay come in with me.

Xanth. I'm very much oblig'd.

Bac. Thou'rt not in earnest :—
For I'll not bear it.

M. S. Then there is within
A lovely girl that plays upon the pipe ;
And dancing girls some two or three.

Xanth. How say'st thou ?—
What dancing girls ?

M. S. I'th' bloom of rip'ning youth,
Trick'd out like brides. ^a—No more, I pray, but enter.
The cook just now was taking up the fish ;
The table was already carried in.

Xanth. Go in, and tell those dancing girls I'm coming :—
Boy ! follow with my things.

Bac. Stir at thy peril.—
Because in sport I made thee Hercules,
Art thou for being so in earnest ? Cease
This idle jesting, Xanthias, and again
Hoist up thy pack and carry it.

Xanth. How's this ?—

^a *Trick'd out like brides.* Αἱ γὰρ μελλονύμφαι ἔτιλλον τὰς
τρέχας. Suidas in locum.

Thou can'st not think of stripping me so soon
Of thy own gift?

Bac. Not soon, but instantly.—
Down with the skin.

Xanth. I do attest the fact;
And to the Gods commit my cause.

Bac. What gods?
O foolish vanity! to hope to pass
For Hercules, when but a slave and mortal.

Xanth. 'Tis well. Here take it; but ere long, please
God,
Thou may'st again perhaps be suing to me.

SCENE III.

CHORUS, BACCHUS, XANTHIAS.

ODE of ten verses.

Chorus. Such the interested plan
Of the sly designing man;
At sea, I ween, 'twas his to learn,
As the vessel tacks, to turn,
Nor in one fix'd posture wait,
Statue-like, th' event of fate.
Thus with much dexterity
Fortune's fav'ring hour to seize,
Is the constant policy
Of the shrewd Theramenes.¹

¹ *Theramenes.* This Theramenes is again attacked in the latter end of this comedy. Thucydides and Diodorus Siculus

SYSTEM of ten verses.

Bacchus. Were't not laughable to see
 Xanthias in his revelry,
 On a rich luxurious bed
 With his wanton doxy laid?
 Then this shameless slave of mine
 I'd been sure to discipline,
 Which affront, full well I know,
 Ill the scoundrel knave wou'd brook,
 But with some revengeful blow,
 Down my throat my teeth had strook.

SCENE IV.

LANDLADY, PLATHANA, XANTHIAS, BACCHUS.

Landl. Plathana! Plathana! Why here he comes,
 The very rogue that went into our inn

speak of him as a man of singular prudence and judgment. His cautious disposition seems to have led him to steer a middle course in political matters; and in the contests between the nobility and the commons, he endeavored to accommodate himself to both parties: upon which account his enemies named him *the buskin*, as it serves for either foot. His having been instrumental to the condemnation of the admirals, after the engagement off the Arginusian Isles, was certainly a great blot in his character. This is sufficient to account for his being attacked by our author in a comedy, where one of his great political objects was to restore the admirals still in disgrace to the favor of the public. It is needless therefore to assign another motive for it in his being a favorite scholar and intimate friend of Socrates.

And eat up sixteen loaves.

Plath. By Jove! the same.

Xanth. There's mischief brewing here for somebody.—

Landl. And twenty dishes ready-drest ;—those too
Not your low-priz'd ones truly.—

Xanth. Somebody
Will pay for't—

Landl. Then a quantity of garlic.—

Bac. Woman thou rav'st : thou know'st not what thou
talk'st of.

Plath. Did'st think forsooth I should not recollect thee
In those fine buskins ?

Landl. Not to say a word
Of all the potted meat, and the green cheese
Which in the very vat the knave devour'd.—
And then, when I insisted upon payment,
He frown'd at me, and roar'd most horribly.

Xanth. Exactly like him.—'Tis his common practice.

Landl. Then, like a madman, out he drew his sword.

Xanth. Alas poor woman !

Plath. Terrified at which
We ran in haste up stairs ; and he mean time
Took to his heels, and carried off the dish-clouts.

Xanth. That's he again.

Plath. But something should be done.

Landl. Make haste and call the president Cleon ;^a

^a *Cleon.* He was treasurer and general of the army, a man of low extraction and violent overbearing manners. He had accused Aristophanes of using too great freedom in his

Bring too Hyperbolus, ¹ if thou can'st meet with him,
 That we may punish him.—Ah shameless glutton!
 Had I a stone, I'd knock out those vile grinders
 With which thou eat'st my property. ²

Plath. And I—

Would plunge thee in the fatal pit.

comedies respecting public matters and private characters; he had also called in question his right to the privileges of a citizen of Athens; for all which he amply retaliated upon him, and composed his comedy of the Knights on purpose to satirise and expose him. He was dead before the performance of the Frogs: the poet however could not forbear this stroke at him, making him the fittest person in hell to examine a robber, upon the principle of our old proverb, “set a thief to catch a thief.”

¹ *Hyperbolus.* Hyperbolus was a citizen of Athens, banished thence on account of the infamy of his character; and afterwards killed in an insurrection at Samos. He was the last person who suffered by the Ostracism, which brought it into such contempt, that it was from that time laid aside.

² ——— *Ah shameless glutton!*

*Had I a stone, I'd knock out those vile grinders
 With which thou eat'st my property.*

I have ventured to make a little alteration in the dialogue here without any authority whatever, by continuing these three lines as belonging to the landlady, and changing the property of the two next speeches: as I imagine Aristophanes certainly made the landlady herself speak of what Hercules had devoured, as her property.

Landl. And I—

Would with a knife cut that voracious throat
That swallow'd down my cakes.

Plath. But I'll to Cleon,
And bring him to examine thee this instant :—
He'll fetch it out of thee, I warrant him.

SCENE V.

BACCHUS, XANTHIAS, CHORUS.

Bac. Perdition seize me but I love thee, Xanthias.

Xanth. I know, I know thy purpose—but no more :—
No more. I'll not be Hercules.

Bac. Not so
My little Xanthias !

Xanth. What I ?—In me
'Twere foolish vanity to hope to pass
For Hercules, when but a slave and mortal.

Bac. I know thou'rt angry at me, and with reason ;
But strike me if thou wilt, I'll not reproach thee :
And if in future I again would strip thee,
May I myself, my wife and family,
And blear-ey'd Archedemus vilely perish. ^a

^a *May I myself, my wife and family,
And blear-ey'd Archedemus vilely perish.*

It is mentioned by Demosthenes in his oration against Aristocrates, (p. 736. Ed. Francf.) that “ in trials for murder the evidence on the part of the prosecution must be sworn to

Xanth. I do accept this oath of thine ; and now,
On these conditions, I resume the skin.

ANTODE of *ten verses.*

Chorus. Since again that garb thou wear'st,
Recollect whose form thou bear'st ;
With his dress while thou'rt endu'd,
Thine be too his fortitude,
Make his valiant port thy own ;
Thine his fierce resistless frown ;
But if thou thy part forsaking
To thy master yield thro' fear,
Once again thy station taking
Thou'lt deserve the pack to bear.

SYSTEM of *ten verses.*

Xanthias. I your counsel cannot blame,
Since, my friends, the very same
Was the thought occur'd to me,
For, so great a rogue is he,
When there's aught that may be gain'd,
He'll again the skin demand.
But if he should make the trial,
Stern shall be the look I'll wear,
Resolute my fix'd denial,
As it ought.—What noise is there ?¹

speaking truth, at the risk of their own well-doing, and that of their family and household."

¹ *What noise is there?* There is much humor in Xanthias's immediate alarm at the noise at the door, in the midst of his

SCENE VI.

ÆACUS, BACCHUS, XANTHIAS.

Æac. Stop that dog-stealer there ;—bind him quickly—
Bring him to punishment.

Bac. 'Tis his turn now. ¹

Xanth. Away, and come not near me.—²

Æac. Thou resistest ?—

Here Ditlos, Scetlias, Pardoca, advance—

Take him by force.

Bac. Is it not barbarous
To flog a man for stealing ?

Xanth. Most inhuman.—

Æac. Shameful and barbarous.—

Xanth. Well, let me die
If ever I before here set my foot

resolutions to pluck up a spirit, and not submit any more to
the caprices of his master.

¹ *'Tis his turn now.* Bacchus and Xanthias are made to
show much delight in seeing each other in a scrape. At the
beginning of the scene, where the landlady and her maid
attack Bacchus, Xanthias had observed with much pleasure,

There's mischief brewing here for *somebody*—

And—*somebody*

Will pay for't.—

Accordingly Bacchus here retorts upon him.

² *Away, and come not near me.* This is said in a threat-
ening attitude.

Or stole from thee the value of a hair.—

But to clear up this matter handsomely,

Here is my slave: take him and question him; ¹

If aught appears against me, let me suffer.

Æac. How shall I question him?

Xanth. By every method—

Tie him upon the ladder;—hang him up;—²

Give him the bristly strap,—flog—torture him;—

Pour vinegar up his nostrils;—t' his feet

Apply the tiles; question him as thou wilt,—

So 'tis not with a rod of leeks and onions.³

Æac. A fair proposal: but in striking him

If chance we maim him, damages will lie.⁴

¹ *Here is my slave: take him and question him.* It was customary to extort confession from slaves by torture. Accordingly Cicero, in his Oration pro P. Sullâ, says--
“Quæstiones nobis servorum ac tormenta accusator minitatur.”
And Demosthenes, speaking of putting a slave to the question, calls it ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ δέσματι ἐλεγχον δίδοναι.

² *By every method—*

Tie him upon the ladder;—hang him up—

The different ways of torturing slaves are briefly comprised in this and the following lines. Abp. Potter, in his Grecian Antiquities, has thought it a sufficient account of this matter to cite, without even translating them.

³ *So 'tis not with a rod of leeks and onions.* A rod made to frighten children, and not to hurt them.

⁴ *If chance we maim him, damages will lie.* It seems these tortures were often so violent, as to occasion the death of the slave, or to disable him for further service: whoever therefore demanded any slave to be put to the question, was obliged to

Xanth. I shall demand none. Lead him to the question.¹

Æac. Here be it, that before thee he may speak.—
Down with thy bundle quickly, and be sure
Thou speak'st the truth, and nothing but the truth.

Bac. I counsel somebody to have a care
Of putting me, who am a God, to th' question.
If he persists, sirrah, impeach thyself.

Æac. What's that thou'rt saying there?

Bac. That I'm a God,
Bacchus, Jove's son;—this fellow's but my slave.

Æac. Do'st thou hear this?

Xanth. I do acknowledge it,
And think him so much fitter for the lash;
For if he is a God he will not feel it.

Bac. In this case, since thou call'st thyself a God too,
Why should'st not thou be flogg'd as well as me?

give his master security in case of his death, or his being any way materially injured.—See Demosthenes's Oration against Pantænetus. p. 993. Ed. Francf.

¹ *I shall demand none. Lead him to the question.* Kuster, in compliance with the Vatican Manuscript, recommends the reading *ἡμὶ γέ* for *ἡμεῖς γέ*, and *τοῦτον* for *οὗτον*, and assigns the verse to Bacchus,

Question not me forsooth—but him himself.
This certainly heightens the humor of the scene: and Bacchus's alarm at the proposal, and his inclination to turn the tables on Xanthias, are highly in character. I have however left Xanthias in possession of the line, as it is so direct an answer to Æacus's objection.

Xanth. 'Tis very fair; and he who first cries out,
Or seems at all affected with the blows,
Be he no more consider'd as a god.

Æac. Thou art, I must confess, a lad of spirit,
Since thou acced'st so readily to justice.—
Strip both.

Xanth. But how to try us equally?

Æac. Most easy that. You shall have stroke for stroke.

Xanth. I'm satisfied.—Mark if thou seest me flinch.

Æac. I struck thee then. ¹

Xanth. No truly.

Æac. So it seems.—

I'll strike this fellow.

Bac. When?

Æac. I struck thee sure.

Bac. How happen'd it I sneez'd not?

Æac. Nay I know not.—

I'll make another trial here.

Xanth. Come, come.

Prithee dispatch—oh! oh!

Æac. What's this—oh! oh?

Did'st feel me?

¹ *I struck thee then.* Æacus begins with striking them so gently they can hardly feel it: he then strikes them as hard as possible, and their excuses for crying out are highly ridiculous.

² *How happen'd it I sneez'd not?* The scholiast explains this by telling us, that sneezing is produced by tickling the nose with a straw. Bacchus's meaning therefore is that, so far from hurting him, it did not even tickle him.

Xanth. No. I was considering when
Hercules' feast begins at Diomeia.¹

Æac. Mighty religious!—Turn I here again.

Bac. Hallo!

Æac. What now!

Bac. I see some horsemen yonder.

Æac. But why these tears?

Bac. Sure I smell onions somewhere.

Æac. Does nothing else affect thee?

Bac. Naught at all.

Æac. Return I to my other gentleman.

Xanth. Ah me!

Æac. What now?

Xanth. Be pleas'd to pick this thorn out.²

Æac. What is the matter?—Here again I turn.

Bac. Pythian, or Delian, O Apollo hear!

Xanth. He felt it then. Thou heard'st him?

Bac. No—'Twas only

One of Hipponax' verses³ I repeated.

¹ *Hercules' feast begins at Diomeia.* Diomeia was one of the little boroughs of Attica belonging to the tribe of Ægeis. Each of these little boroughs worshipped peculiar Gods of their own: Hercules was probably the tutelary Deity of the place.

² *Be pleas'd to pick this thorn out.* Lifting up his leg, as if he had got a thorn in it, which was the cause of his crying out.

³ *One of Hipponax' verses.* The scholiast says the verse is one of Ananias, and not of Hipponax. This seems meant to show that Bacchus was in such pain, that he did not know what he said.

Xanth. He minds thee not. Strike him i'th' guts.

Æac. Not he.—

Stand fair.—

Bac. O Neptune!—

Xanth. Some one felt it then.

Bac. From Sunium's brow¹ that rul'st the azure waves!

Æac. By Ceres 'tis impossible to learn
Which of you is the God—so e'en walk in.
Pluto and Proserpine will surely know you,
As they are Gods themselves.

Bac. Thou speakest well.—
And yet I wish this plan had been adopted
Before I'd undergone the flagellation.

STROPHE.²

Chorus. Muse! while to chant the choral strain
I ask thy tuneful harmony,

Hipponax was a native of Ephesus, and flourished about the sixtieth Olympiad. He was deformed in his person, and ill-favored in his countenance. Bupalus and Anthernus, two brothers, who were famous statuaries, made a ridiculous image of him, which they exhibited in sport: but he took his revenge upon them in such severe verses, that he drove them out of Ephesus, and it was said they were so much hurt by them, that they hanged themselves. He is accordingly called by Horace

Acer hostis Bupalus. Epo. 6.

¹ *From Sunium's brow.* Sunium was a promontory in the Ægean sea, where Neptune had a temple.

² *Strophe.* From the accounts we have of the comic

Mark thou the busy race of men,
And all their schemes of policy!

chorus, and from the specimens of it in the works of Aristophanes which remain to us, it appears that in each comedy was given one complete chorus, or interlude of singing and dancing, accompanied with music. This was generally introduced in the Epitasis of the drama when the plot was advancing to its height, and consisted of six different pieces.—1st, The Commation, in which the chorus generally addressed themselves to one of the characters, or applauded the actor.—2d, The Parabasis, or piece in which the chorus advancing further on the stage addressed the audience on the subject of the drama, the performance of it, or the tricks and absurdities of other poets—which office, upon the disuse of the chorus in the *new comedy*, devolved upon the prologue.—3d, The Strophe, as it was called when sung accompanied with a sort of dance, in which they moved round the stage, or, when sung without the dance, the Ode: this piece was composed in some lyric measure, and the subject was generally an address of invocation or panegyric to some Deity, or a satirical attack on some infamous character.—4th, The Epirrhema, which after this movement round the stage was delivered by them, turning immediately to the audience, whom they addressed in a style of instruction or reproof on some moral or political subject.—5th, The Antistrophe or Antode which corresponded in every respect with the Strophe or Ode; only in the Antistrophe the movement round the stage was in a contrary direction to that of the Strophe.—6th, The Antepirrhema, which corresponded exactly with the Epirrhema in the number of verses and manner of its delivery.

There were also shorter choruses, or of a more irregular kind (as that at the end of the first act of this comedy) sung at

How to ambition's goal they run
More eager e'en than Cleophon;—¹

the end of each act. Odes, strophes, and other lyric pieces, some of which they called systems, were besides frequently given in the middle of an act: and sometimes, after the dialogue had been resumed for a scene, or two, odes or systems correspondent to the preceding ones were introduced.

This chorus is incomplete;—the commation and parabasis being wanting.—This would have been particularly unfortunate—as it is recorded by Dicæarchus, the scholar of Aristotle, that this comedy was so much admired by the audience, *διὰ τὴν ἐν αὐτῷ Παράβασιν*, that they caused it to be performed again. But it seems that by the parabasis here the whole of the chorus is meant, the scholiast upon the place using the word clearly in that sense: and from the argument of Thomas Magister prefixed to this comedy, where the subject of the favorite parabasis is mentioned, the antepirrhema seems to have been the particular part of this chorus they were so wonderfully pleased with.

¹ *Cleophon*. He was an Athenian general born of Thracian parents, and is mentioned in Diodorus Siculus as opposing a peace with the Lacedæmonians when they solicited it after their defeat at Cyzicum, at which time the more moderate of the Athenians were inclined to the measure. He seems to have been an obnoxious character, and was satirised by the comic poet Plato in a play of the same name, which was represented at the same time with this comedy of our author, and gained the third honors. He is generally understood to have been the person alluded to by Euripides in his tragedy of *Orestes*. V. 902.

———And there arose a man endued
With fluent speech and boldness unappall'd;

Than him, with never-ceasing tongue
 Who rolls his murmurings along,
 And in a barb'rous Thracian tone
 Screams loudly forth his horrid moan,
 Th' injustice of his fate arraigns,
 And of determin'd cruelty ¹ complains.

EPIRRHEMA. ²

Semichorus. The sacred chorus it behoves to counsel,
 And recommend to th' practice of the state

An Argive who in Argos was not born,
 But 'mongst its native denizens by force
 Obtain'd a seat ; in tumult he relied,
 And an unletter'd confidence, nor wanted
 The talent of persuasion to involve them
 In any mischief.—

WOODHULL.

¹ *Determin'd cruelty.* To mark the great detestation in which Cleophon was held, who was at this time threatened with an accusation, if not actually impeached, our poet makes him here express his apprehension of not meeting with a fair trial, but the law would be stretched to accomplish his destruction.

² *Epirrhema.* This Epirrhema, which is entirely political, is absolutely misunderstood by P. Brumoy, who says it is meant “to reproach the Athenians with bestowing their first employments and most distinguished titles on strangers, even slaves, for having once assisted at a naval engagement.”—To enable us to enter into the true meaning and design of this part of the chorus, and indeed perfectly to understand several passages in this comedy, it may be necessary to give a short account of the engagement off the Arginusian Isles, as it has

Whate'er may best promote the gen'ral weal.
First then I deem it right that, by restoring

been related by the Grecian historians, and is further illustrated by this comedy, and the annotations of the scholiast thereon.

Callicratidas, the Lacedæmonian admiral, having pursued the Athenian fleet under Conon into Mitylene, took a considerable number of his ships, kept him blocked up there, and intercepted ten more sail sent to his relief. The Athenians, exasperated at this, exerted themselves to fit out a fleet of a hundred and ten sail, which they manned with every person of fit age for service, slaves as well as freemen: and as an encouragement to the slaves to behave well in the engagement, it was decreed, that, if they returned victorious, they should be made free, and enjoy all the privileges of citizens. The victory was a complete one; but the Athenian admirals, ten in number, who, upon Alcibiades's withdrawing himself, had the joint command of the war, instead of being rewarded, were brought into the utmost disgrace. Upon the relation of the fight before the senate, they were accused of having neglected to take up the bodies of those who fell in the engagement;—a considerable crime in the eye of the Athenians, who were careful to superstition in procuring honorable interment for their soldiers who lost their lives in battle! They were accordingly thrown into prison. When brought to trial, they urged in their defence, that they were pursuing the enemy, and had given proper orders about taking up the dead bodies, particularly to Theramenes, who upon this occasion was their accuser, but that the execution of their orders was prevented by a violent storm, which rendered it necessary for the fleet to provide for its safety by making into port. This however had no effect, the popular fury ran so high against

Each citizen to his accustom'd rank,¹
 All grounds of apprehension you remove.—
 For those, who led away by Phrynicus²

them—Eight of the ten were condemned, and six put to death.—It seems also that the people in general began to repent of the hasty step taken in making the slaves free, which, as it was probably done at the suggestion of the admirals who were to have the command, we may suppose to have contributed to keep up the resentment of the people against the promoters of it.

The design then of the poet in this *Epirrhema*, or address to the audience, appears to have been to soften the people respecting the admirals who still remained in disgrace, and to reconcile them to the measure of making the slaves free.—These points he endeavors to carry with much art, not speaking out decisively at first, but seeming rather to agree with them in their disapprobation of granting such privileges to unworthy persons on such slight grounds, and at last recommending it only from the peculiar circumstances of the times.

¹ ——— *By restoring*

Each citizen to his accustom'd rank.

The most common punishment among the Athenians was *Ἀτίμια*, 'infamy or public disgrace.'

Aristophanes artfully introduces the immediate object of this address, which was the restoring the disgraced admirals to the favor of the public, by recommending a general disposition to pardon all offences hitherto committed, so as to heal all complaints and murmurs, and to unite every party in the general defence of the state.

² *Phrynicus*. It does not appear who this Phrynicus was, whether the tragic or comic poet of that name. It would

Have from their duty swerv'd, be they permitted
 To own their errors, and receive their pardon.
 Nor would I have remaining in the city
 A single person mark'd with infamy.—
 Yet 'tis not just that they, on one occasion
 Who were engag'd at sea, should straightway claim
 A liberty to rank with the Plataëans,¹
 And rise from servitude to amplest freedom.
 Not that I mean to blame the measure;—No,
 I must commend it, since this once you've acted
 From prudent motives.—With respect to those,
 Who to yourselves allied have often led
 Your warlike fleets, as did their valiant sires,
 'Tis meet that, in compliance with their prayers,
 You deign to overlook this one transgression.—
 Nay more, O ye with clear discernment fraught,
 Purging our breasts from every spark of anger,
 Let us to all our rights and privileges

seem more probably to relate to the Phrynicus who made a violent stir against the recal of Alcibiades, and offered to betray the Athenian army and navy to the Lacedæmonians, but that Phrynicus was murdered at least five years before the representation of this comedy.

² *A liberty to rank with the Plataëans.* The Plataëans were the only people that assisted the Athenians, when the Persian army under Datis and Artabanus were marching to attack them; upon which occasion they sent them a thousand men. For this, and their particular zeal and service at the battle of Plataea, when Mardonius was defeated, they had several extraordinary privileges granted them by the Athenians.

Each gallant sailor cordially admit.
 For if too far we carry our resentment,
 And proudly mark the measure with abhorrence,
 When such impending dangers threat the state ;
 The time will come, that we shall find occasion
 To think our boasted prudence here had fail'd us.

ANTISTROPHE.

Of men th' approaching destiny
 If in their actions I can read,
 How short the space of time I see
 To that vile Cligenes^a decreed !
 Of all the bathing trade who ply
 Unrival'd he in infamy,
 Nor, 'midst the unguents they prepare
 From various loams, can aught compare
 With him, or aught so vile be found ;
 A stunted ape for vice renown'd,
 A wretch for riot's deeds prepar'd,
 Yet, justly fearful, ever on his guard !

ANTEPIRRHEMA.

I often have observ'd our state to act
 Towards our good and worthless citizens
 In the same manner, as of late she did

^a *Cligenes*. Cligenes was a bathing man, who having acquired a considerable fortune, entered much into all political matters. He is said to have feigned himself mad, and under that pretence to have gone about armed.

By our old monies and this modern coinage.*
 For not those pieces which are found deficient,
 But ev'n the very fairest of our coins,
 Those which alone are beautifully stamp'd,
 Whose purity has amply been assay'd,
 We use not in our commerce with the nations,
 But in their stead, adopt a baser metal,
 One lately coin'd, and that most wretchedly.—
 Thus of our citizens the best approv'd,
 For lib'ral sentiments, and blameless manners,
 For public justice, and for private worth,
 Skill'd in each graceful art and exercise,
 No longer we employ, but rather use
 The basest wretches, foreigners and slaves,
 Or infamous themselves, or sprung from those
 Who ever have been held so, refugees,
 Whom formerly the state had not admitted

* ———— *As of late she did*

By our old monies and this modern coinage.

The year before the representation of this comedy, under the archonship of Antigenes, the old gold coin was all called in, and a new coinage made of a much baser metal. From this circumstance the poet takes occasion, in this most elegant and spirited address, to expostulate with the people for intrusting the management of their public affairs to men of infamous characters and extreme incapacity.—I cannot but imagine this to have been the particular part of this comedy, which made it so great a favorite with the people. In the first line of this Antepirrhema I have adopted the reading recommended by Duker *καὶ γὰρ*, instead of *καὶ γὰρ*.

At our lustrations, as sufficient victims
 With their devoted blood to purge the city.¹
 Change then, ye senseless men, your mode of acting :
 Call to your service those best qualified
 To serve you well. Their wise and prudent conduct,
 Which gives them ev'ry title to success,
 Will commendation claim ; but should they fail,
 'Twill still appear to every candid judge,
 That your misfortunes were inevitable,
 And such, as will not sully your fair name
 With foul disgrace, or lasting infamy.

ACT III. SCENE I.

ÆACUS, XANTHIAS.

Æac. BY Jove ! thy master's quite the man of fashion.

Xanth. Why how should he be otherwise ?...I'm sure
 Whoring and drinking are his sole pursuits.

Æac. How happen'd it he did not rate thee well,
 And cudgel thee, when thou a slave dar'dst pass
 Thyself for him ?

¹ *At our lustrations as sufficient victims*

With their devoted blood to purge the city.

It was customary at certain times when the city labored under any particular calamity to *lustrate* it, as it was called, by men offering themselves as voluntary victims. Some of the lowest and vilest of the people were selected for this purpose, and supported at the public expense, till some calamity attacking the city made a lustration necessary.

Xanth. 'Twas well for him he did not.

Æac. Why now thou treat'st him as a servant ought,
And as I'd like to serve my master.

Xanth. Pray,—
Wouldst like it?

Æac. 'Tis the height of happiness¹
To me when I can curse him secretly.

Xanth. What when well thrash'd thou goest out
muttering?

Æac. Ev'n then it joys me.

Xanth. Or when thou art bid
Do twenty things at once?

Æac. Not I, by Jove!

Xanth. But, my illustrious brother;—when thou
listen'st

To overhear thy master's conversation?

Æac. The wond'rous pleasure makes me almost mad.

Xanth. And when abroad thou tell'st it all again?

Æac. O Jupiter!—I can't contain myself.

Xanth. Give me thy hand, my little oracle!
Let us embrace, and tell me I conjure thee
By Jove our brother in iniquity—
What means this hubbub that I hear within?²

¹ 'Tis the height of happiness. Ultima meta τῆς μυχῆσεως erat fieri epoptam : quare ἐποπτεύειν proverbii instar de frui-
one summi boni dicitur. Casaub. in Athenæum, l. 6. c. 15.

² What means this hubbub that I hear within? Xanthias
is interrupted in this humorous examination of his brother
slave, by the disturbance between Æschylus and Euripides,
which he is supposed to hear within.

What's all this clamor and abusive language?

Æac. Between Euripides and Æschylus—

Xanth. Indeed!

Æac. For lately there has been much tumult,
And riot, stirr'd up in the shades—

Xanth. From whence?

Æac. It is a law establish'd here, that he,
Who in each noble and ingenious art
Above his fellows shines pre-eminent,
Should at the Prytaneum be maintain'd,¹
And have his seat next Pluto's.—

Xanth. I conceive it.

Æac. Till one more skilful than himself arrives ;—
For then he must resign it.

Xanth. But, I pray,
Say how can this have rous'd up Æschylus?

¹ *Should at the Prytaneum be maintain'd.* Σίττις ἐν Πρυτανείῳ was at first an entertainment given at Athens in the common hall to such as deserved well of the commonwealth. Afterwards some persons were constantly maintained there. This was reputed one of the greatest honors that could be conferred on merit: whence Socrates, being asked by the court what punishment he thought he deserved, replied, “that they should allow him a constant maintenance at the Prytaneum.”

This custom our poet carries down into the shades, allotting the seat of honor at Pluto's table in the infernal Prytaneum to the chief in every art, and making this privilege the subject matter of the dispute between Æschylus and Euripides, which takes up the remaining part of this comedy.

Æac. He held possession of the tragic chair
As in that art the chief—

Xanth. Who has it now ?

Æac. Soon as Euripides came down amongst us,
To thieves and cut-purses, murd'ers, house-breakers,
With whom indeed hell very much abounds,
He'd be performing ; till they, charm'd forsooth
With his replies, his strains and choruses,
Raving about him swore he was unequal'd.—
Elate with this he stood forth candidate
For *Æschylus's* chair.—

Xanth. Was he not pelted ?

Æac. No !—But the mob roar'd out for public trial
Of their abilities.

Xanth. The rascals roar'd ?

Æac. To the skies.

Xanth. Had *Æschylus* no other seconds ?

Æac. Good folks are scarce ;—and so it is with us.

Xanth. What part takes *Pluto* ?

Æac. He directs a contest ;
A hearing and decision on their merits.

Xanth. And then how happen'd it that *Sophocles*
Did not put in his claim ?

Æac. Not he, by *Jove* !—
When hither he came down, he instantly
Embrac'd *Æschylus*, shook him by the hand,
And in his favor gave up all pretensions.—
And now,—as by *Clidemides* ¹ I'm told,

¹ *Clidemides.* One of the scholiasts says, this *Clidemides*
was probably a son of *Sophocles*, which is not said by

He will attend the trial as third man,
 Content if Æschylus victorious prove ;
 But otherwise has said he'll try his skill
 In contest with Euripides.

Xanth. Inform me—

How will the matter be conducted?

Æac. Here

'Th' important bus'ness straightway will begin,
 And in a balance poetry be weigh'd.

Xanth. Weigh tragedy with scrupulous exactness? ¹

Æac. They will produce the stated rules of verse,
 Its standard measures,—form their squares correctly,—
 Draw their diagonals, and intersect them
 With opposite angles ;—for Euripides
 Declares their tragedies shall be examin'd
 With tort'ring scrutiny thro' ev'ry line.

Suidas, who mentions the names of his sons ; another scholiast supposes him to have been one of his actors.

¹ *Weigh tragedy with scrupulous exactness.* The Greek expression owed its origin to a circumstance that happened at an Athenian festival when the youths were presented to be registered, upon which occasion it was customary to sacrifice a sheep. The victim was to be of a certain size ; but the standers by, fancying it was too little, cried out *Μεῖον, Μεῖον* ; in consequence of which the victim was ever after called *Μεῖον*, and the person that offered it *Μειάγῳρος*. It seems probable also that from that time they were very exact in the weight of the animal to be sacrificed ; and accordingly the verb *μειάγωρω* signifies “ to weigh any thing with great nicety.”

Xanth. I ween that Æschylus brooks this but ill.

Æac. Like a stern bull, he hangs his frowning brow.

Xanth. Who's to decide ?

Æac. There was the difficulty ;—

They found a scarcity of men of taste,
And Æschylus approv'd not of Athenians.

Xanth. Many perhaps he thought were house-breakers.¹

Æac. As to the rest, he held them much too trifling
To judge of poetry.—To thy master
They therefore have intrusted the decision,
As in the art a connoisseur.—But enter ;—
For when our masters take it in their heads
To be in haste, we're sure to feel their cudgels.

CHORUS.²

How will the bard of furious soul
Swell with indignant rage,
His glaring eyes in frenzy roll,
To see his wily foe preparing to engage !—
Grand shall now the contest be
Of glitt'ring phraseology ;

¹ *Many perhaps he thought were house-breakers.* This refers to the description already given by Æacus of the admirers of Euripides ; and is meant to convey a reflection on the Athenians for their bad taste, in showing such a partiality to the compositions of that poet.

² *Chorus.* This chorus is designed to give a specimen of the different manners of the two contending poets. Æschylus's originality of thought, boldness of imagery, and elevation of language, are set in opposition to the studied correctness, and affected harmony of numbers, of Euripides.

While one shall ev'ry strain'd conceit refine,
 Paring each thought, and polishing each line,
 The other scorning art's dull track to try,
 Shall pour his genuine thoughts in loftiest poesy.

His bristly neck aloft he'll rear
 And shake his shaggy mane,
 A low'ring frown his brow shall wear,
 Fierce emblem of disdain,
 While he in furious mood along
 Shall roll his complicated song,
 As from the vessel's side by storms are torn
 Its solid planks in well-wedg'd durance join'd,
 Or as afar the dreadful sounds are borne
 When from earth's centre bursts th' imprison'd wind.—
 With powers of pliability
 And tuneful tongue the other fraught,
 Studious of smoothest harmony,
 Shall twist and torture ev'ry thought,
 While, with superior subtilty,
 In many a nicely-labor'd phrase,
 Champing the bit of envy, he
 Retorts upon his rival's sounding lays.

SCENE II.

EURIPIDES, BACCHUS, ÆSCHYLUS.

Eur. Spare your advice;—I'll not resign the chair :—
 For in the art I hold myself superior.

Bac. Why art thou silent, Æschylus?—Thou hear'st
 him.

Eur. Such is his pompous way of introducing
The monsters that adorn his tragedies.¹

Bac. Fellow ! no more of this abusive language !

Eur. His character I've sifted well and know him—
One who describes mankind as savages ;
A forward prater with unbridled tongue
That scorns restraint, and lips that ne'er are clos'd ;
With ev'ry grace of diction unacquainted,
A mere compiler of bombastic words!²

Æsch. Ev'n so, O thou from rural Goddess sprung !³
Thus unto me dar'st thou address thyself,
Thou gleaner of refin'd expressions, thou
That introducest beggars in thy dramas,⁴

¹ *Such is his pompous way of introducing*

The monsters that adorn his tragedies.

One of the faults, with which Euripides in the ensuing act charges Æschylus is, that after he had brought his principal characters upon the stage, he kept them silent a considerable time, to raise the expectation of the audience.

² *A mere compiler of bombastic words!* The grand object of Æschylus in his tragedies was terror: his language is accordingly sublime and elevated, though as P. Brunoy observes, "quelquefois gigantesque."

³ *Ev'n so, O thou from rural Goddess sprung!* This is a sneer at Euripides as being the son of a woman that sold cabbage; the truth of which circumstance has been much contested. The line is a parody on one of Euripides.

⁴ *That introducest beggars in thy dramas.* In his *Telephus* he had brought in the king of the Mysians disguised as a beggar.

'Thou manufacturer of rags and tatters?—

Thou shalt not talk thus with impunity.

Bac. Give over, Æschylus;—nor through revenge
With anger fire thy soul.

Æsch. I'll not give o'er
'Till I show forth this cripple-coining fellow—
How he presumes, and on what poor pretences.

Bac. A lamb, my lads, bring hither a black lamb:¹—
'The storm is gath'ring, and will burst upon us.

Æsch. Thou framer vile of Cretan monodies,²
That bring'st incestuous nuptials³ on the stage!

Bac. My worthy Æschylus, forbear I pray.—
Sirrah Euripides!—if thou art wise,

¹ *Bring hither a black lamb.* The ancients were used to sacrifice a black lamb to appease the storms: so Virgil,

Nigram hyemi pecudem.

² *Cretan monodies.* Euripides had laid the scene of several of his dramas in Crete, of two particularly, which are in this play attacked by Æschylus, his *Æolus* and *Hippolytus*.

By *monodies* seem to be meant lyric parts put in the mouths of the single characters of the piece, and not performed by the chorus. Indeed Euripides appears to have departed more from the Iambic measure in this dialogue, than any of the other tragic poets; for which Aristophanes means to censure him, as having thereby debased the dignity of tragedy. In his *Hippolytus* there are above two hundred lyric lines employed in the dialogue, and quite independent of the chorus.

³ *Incestuous nuptials.* This alludes to his *Æolus*, the subject of which was the incestuous passion of Macareus and Canace, the son and daughter of Æolus, for each other.

Move at a distance from this storm of hail ;—
 Lest in his passion he with some huge word
 Cracking thy skull let out a Telephus.—
 Nor thou with passion, Æschylus, but mildly,
 Retort his charges, for it ill becomes
 Poets of eminence to scold each other
 In language foul like bakers' wives ;—but thou
 Roar'st like a faggot crackling on the fire.

Eur. Ready am I, nor do in aught refuse
 To criticise his works, or to abide,
 Would he begin th' attack, his criticisms,
 In point of language, numbers, tragic powers,
 In Peleus, Æolus, and Meleager ;—
 Nay in this very Telephus thou talk'st of.

Bac. What will'st thou should be done ?—Speak,
 Æschylus !

Æsch. I should not like contending with him here,
 Because we are not on an equal footing.

Bac. How so ?

Æsch. My poetry surviv'd me ;¹—his
 Deceasing with him, he'll avail him of it.—
 Yet, since it pleases thee, ev'n be it so !

Bac. Hither bring incense straight and fire, that I,
 Ere they their skill display, may offer prayers,
 This contest to decide with perfect taste.—
 Meantime address the muses with some strain.

¹ *My poetry surviv'd me.* The state of Athens paid a singular honor to the memory of Æschylus, by making a decree that his tragedies should be performed after his death.

CHORUS.

Ye muses nine, chaste progeny
 Of Jove, who with observant eye
 Behold the teeming thoughts that roll
 Within each poet's plastic soul,
 While anxious for the wreath of fame,
 Their best-imagin'd lays they frame,
 Their various pow'rs ambitious try
 For fancy fam'd and harmony;
 Think not unworthy your regards
 The efforts of contending bards:
 Assist them with your pow'r divine;
 To one supply the sounding line;
 The other aid to roll along
 The labor'd elegance of song.—
 Ev'n now their rival strains they pour,
 To meet th' award of this decisive hour.

Bac. Ye too, before your tuneful strains ye pour,
 Address to heav'n your holy invocations.

Æsch. O Ceres,¹ thou that nourishest my soul,
 O make me worthy of thy mysteries!

Bac. Now offer thou thy incense.—

¹ *O Ceres.* Æschylus addresses himself to Ceres, as being the tutelary deity of Eleusis; of which borough he was a native. This invocation and the burning of incense, Brumoy observes, are in allusion to the ancient practice of offering sacrifices and invocations, before any cause of consequence was pleaded.

Eur. Pray excuse me:—

The gods I worship are of other kind.

Bac. Gods of thy own, of some new coinage truly?¹

Eur. Ev'n so.

Bac. At least prefer thy vows to them.

Eur. Thou air that feedest me and giv'st my tongue
Its pliancy!—and thou intelligence!

And ye, sagacious powers of penetration!²

Aid me, where'er I point my criticisms,

To drag his various faults to public view.

CHORUS.

What fierce desires our bosoms fill

To hear these men of matchless skill

Display their nicest harmony,

And pour their rival poesy!

For while their tongues begin to glow,

Their breasts no cold conceptions know,

¹ *Gods of thy own, of some new coinage truly.* Socrates the intimate friend of Euripides was supposed to have introduced new deities unknown to the Athenians; Euripides is here charged with having adopted the principles of his friend, and with disregarding the established worship of the state.

² *And ye, sagacious powers of penetration.* The scholiast in explaining μυκτῆρες ὀσφραντήριον as *affecting the voice*, has scarcely reached the meaning of Aristophanes, who seems to have made Euripides pray for the power of *smelling* out most accurately the faults of Æschylus in order to expose them.

Emunctæ naris.

HOR.

But fancy with her brightest fires
 Their emulative souls inspires.
 From one then we expect to hear
 Each softer grace that charms the ear,
 Each polish'd thought and pleasing sound ;
 The other shall his powers display
 In daring thoughts and loftier lay,
 Scatt'ring his wild conceits around.

ACT IV.¹ SCENE I.

BACCHUS, EURIPIDES, ÆSCHYLUS.

Bac. Now let me hear what each of you would say :
 But be your language polished, and be sure
 Keep clear of metaphors and plagiarisms.

¹ *Act iv.* In this act the two contending poets attack each other's performances in general with a view to their characters, diction, and subjects, as well as the effect their compositions had on the manners of the age.—In the concluding act they are introduced minutely examining the distinct parts of their respective tragedies (the particular expressions of which they criticise and play upon,) and reciting and parodying the choruses of each other, so as to make them highly ridiculous.

It will be impossible fully to explain all the references and allusions we shall meet with in these two acts to the different pieces of the two tragic poets ; since of the seventy-two tragedies of Æschylus, of which we have the titles, seven only are

Eur. How far I boast perfection in the drama
 In future I will prove ; but first I'll show you
 This arrogant impostor, with what tricks
 He play'd upon the audience, whom he found
 To folly ready bred by Phrynicus.¹
 First then he'd muffle up his characters,²

come down to us, and of Euripides, who is said to have composed ninety-two, we have only nineteen.—We may imagine how impossible it would be to explain the various allusions to the works of different dramatic authors in the Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal*, (which has been observed to have some resemblance to this comedy) were the performances that produced it lost, and most of the circumstances alluded to buried in oblivion. We must not therefore expect to receive the same entertainment from these two concluding acts which they afforded the Athenians; but they may still be read with much pleasure. They afford us a singular specimen of comedy entering into the minuter province of criticism, and attacking two of the principal tragic writers of the age.

¹ *Phrynicus*. Phrynicus the tragic poet is said to have been a scholar of Thespis.

In the argument prefixed to the *Persians* of Æschylus it is mentioned, that he had been charged with forming that play upon the plan of a tragedy of this Phrynicus.

² *Muffle up his characters*. Bergler observes that this charge of Euripides against Æschylus recoils upon himself; and instances his introducing Adrastus thus muffled up in his *Suppliants*, v. 112.

Some Niobe, for instance, or Achilles,¹
 And bring them on the stage their faces hid,
 As mutes ;² for not a single word they utter'd.

Bac. Not they, by Jupiter.

Eur. Mean-time the chorus
 Sang regularly four successive strains ;³ —
 But they kept silence.

Bac. And that silence truly
 Pleas'd me as much as all our modern speeches.⁴

To thee who in a fleecy cloak art wrapp'd
 My questions I address, thy head unveil
 And speak. WOODHULL.

And in his *Hecuba* the chorus points out Hecuba herself in the same situation to Talthybius, v. 486.

Near you on the ground she lies
 Supine and in her mantle wrapp'd. WOODHULL.

¹ *Niobe—Achilles.* Characters in tragedies of Æschylus now lost—the former in his tragedy of the same name, the latter either in his *Phrygians* or *Myrmidons*.

² *As mutes.* Spanheim, on the word *πρόσχημα*, says, “à Græcis dictum de eo, qui vel mutus in scenam, seu ad ostentationem tantum prodit.”

³ *Sang regularly four successive strains.* Of the seven tragedies of Æschylus, that remain to us, six have not more than four principal choruses, which therefore we may suppose to have been the general number he was accustomed to introduce into each of his dramatic compositions.

⁴ *All our modern speeches.* A sneer at Euripides for putting long speeches in the mouths of inferior characters.

Eur. Thou wast a simpleton, thou know'st it well.

Bac. It may be so ; but tell me, to what purpose
'This fellow did it.

Eur. From impertinence,—

To keep the audience, during the performance,
Waiting to hear when Niobe should speak.

Bac. A rascal ! How was I deceiv'd in him !
Why dost thou yawn, and seem so much disturb'd ?

Eur. At my reproaches. Having play'd these tricks,—
Just as the piece was above half concluded,
They'd speak perhaps some dozen bellowing words,
Of such high-crested and terrific form,
The audience truly could not comprehend them.

Æsch. O miserable me !

Bac. Keep silence there.

Eur. Naught could be understood.—

Bac. Grind not thy teeth.

Eur. Rivers and trenches, griffins eagle-wing'd,
Like those we see on shields glitt'ring in brass,
And lofty sounding words that mock'd conjecture.

Bac. By Jove, I've sometimes scarcely clos'd my eyes
Throughout the night, but lain considering¹

¹ *By Jove, I've sometimes scarcely clos'd my eyes
Throughout the night, but lain considering.*

An allusion to a passage in the *Hippolytus* of Euripides, v. 380.

—— thro' many a wakeful night

Have I consider'd, whence mankind became

Thus universally corrupt.

WOODHULL.

What winged animal his flying horse was.¹

Æsch. Blockhead! A mere device for naval ensigns.²

Bac. In truth I fancied 'twas a joke on Eryx.³

Eur. But why such fictions in a tragedy?

Æsch. What sort are thine, thou irreligious wretch?

Eur. Not flying horses, or goat-stags like thine,

Monsters ne'er seen, except in Persian tap'stry.

When I receiv'd the tragic art from thee

Inflated with bombast, its language loaded,

Its cumbrous bulk I lessen'd, and reduc'd

¹ *What winged animal his flying horse was.* The scholiast on Aristophanes's comedy of *Peace* where this *ἰππαλεκτρύων* is mentioned, says it is taken from the *Myrmidons* of Æschylus. In his *Prometheus chained* he makes Oceanus travel on a winged steed, v. 282.

Far distant thro' the vast expanse of air

To thee, Prometheus, on this swift-wing'd steed,

Whose neck unrein'd obeys my will, I come.

POTTER.

² *Naval ensigns.* The *παράσημον* or *ensign*, by which the ancients distinguished their ships, was the representation of the god, animal, monster, or device, from which the ship was named. This was carved, or painted, either on the head or stern of the ship. Abp. Potter supposes it to have been a flag, but supports his opinion with no authority whatever.

³ *Joke on Eryx.* The scholiast says, a person of a very strange and deformed appearance.

Its turgid style with cooling applications,¹
 And words of mod'rate size, and gen'ral use.
 I added elegance of diction strain'd
 From books,² and with Cephisopho's assistance³

¹ *With cooling applications.* Τευτλίσισι μικροῖς. Spanheim in a note on these words cites the following passage from the "Geoponica" of Sotio, respecting the use of the τεύτλιον or σεύτλον which equally mean *beet*, as an external application in swellings; μιγνύμενος δὲ ὁ χύλος τοῦ σευτλοῦ ἄμα κηρῶ, καὶ λυόμενος, καὶ μετὰ ρακίου ἐπιτιθέμενος, πάντα σκληρὰ καὶ οἰδαίνοντα παύῃ θεραπεύει. "The juice of beet mixed with wax, and melted, and laid on with a rag cures all complaints of a hard and tumid nature."

²

—————strain'd

From books.

I have here adopted the reading recommended by Biset of ἀπήθων *percolans*, instead of ἄπ' ἧθων, ἐ *moribus*, as it is in all the editions. There is a passage in the "Alcestis" of Euripides, v. 983. in which, though it is put in the mouth of the chorus, the poet seems to pique himself on his learning, to which it is possible Aristophanes here alludes, or to his having perhaps boasted that he displayed more learning in his compositions than his brother poets.

Fir'd by my genius with sublimer views

In learning's stores I found delight,

Yet naught avail'd th' enchantments of the Muse

Against necessity's superior might.

WOODHULL.

³ *Cephisopho's assistance.* Cephisopho was Euripides's principal actor, and was said to assist him in his compositions. Our author alludes to him in several other places, both on this

Enrich'd the scene with tuneful monodies.¹
 Then 'twas my rule to scorn all idle tricks,
 Nor introduce confusion in the drama,
 But he, who first appear'd upon the stage,
 Explain'd the gen'ral history of the piece.

Æsch. 'Twas better for thee, than t' explain thy own.²

Eur. Then from the first I never introduc'd
 A useless character, but gave the mistress,
 The slave, the prince, the lady, and her nurse
 Their equal share of dialogue.³

Æsch. And say,
 Deserv'st thou not the gallows for thy folly?

account, and as being too familiar with Euripides's wife, with whom the poet detected him; which is assigned by Thomas Magister, in his life, as the cause of his quitting Athens and removing to the court of Archelaus.

¹ *Monodies.* Another allusion to his frequent introduction of lyric numbers in the dialogue.

² *'Twas better for thee, than t' explain thy own.* Another allusion to the story of his low extraction.

³ ————— *I never introduc'd*

*A useless character, but gave the mistress,
 The slave, the prince, the lady, and her nurse,
 Their equal share of dialogue.*

Aristophanes here makes Euripides, while he attacks the mute and useless characters of Æschylus, pride himself upon having pursued a very opposite conduct, by putting a considerable part of the dialogue in the mouths of inferior characters. A satirical stroke this on his not sufficiently discriminating his characters, as in the first part of his "Hippolytus;" where the *Sedula nutrix* is a more important character, and has more to say, than the *Matrona potens*.

Eur. By Phœbus, it was done to please the people.

Bac. No more. That argument but ill becomes thee.

Eur. I taught all these to speak.¹

Æsch. 'Tis true, thou didst;

But would to heav'n, thou hadst broke thy neck first!

Eur. The rudiments of rhetoric, and all

The artificial combinations

Of words 'twas mine to teach them, and moreover

Reflection, observation, intelligence,

Persuasion, versatility, contrivance,

Guarded suspicion, general invention.

Æsch. I freely grant thou didst.

Eur. Then introducing

Into my dramas things of notoriety

And common use (for which were I to blame,

These, who observ'd it, would have blam'd me for it)²

¹ *I taught all these to speak.* Bergler understands by τούτους the Athenian orators, and observes what has been remarked by Quintilian, that Euripides's style is an excellent model for those who plead at the bar. But it seems from Æschylus's reply to him that it has here a more general meaning. We shall also find Æschylus presently charging him with having corrupted the language of the people in general, who were certainly very fond of his verses. Aristophanes then makes him here claim merit from having formed their language. The whole of Euripides's defence is carried on in the strongest vein of irony.

² *For which were I to blame,*

These, who observ'd it, would have blam'd me for it.

A reflection on the Athenians for their being pleased with the lowness of the subjects, and the familiarity of style in Euripides's compositions.

I never gave into bombastic language
 Their taste depraving, or my characters,
 A Cyncus, or a Memnon, dress'd in trappings,
 And rattling bells to terrify the audience.¹
 Mark too the glaring difference between
 Our sev'ral scholars. Amongst his thou't see
 Phormisius and that slave Megænetus,²
 Fellows who clad in the fierce garb of war
 Pique themselves on their rude and savage manners ;
 While I can boast th' accomplish'd Clitipho,
 And elegant Theramenes.

Bac. What him ?—

He is indeed a wond'rous clever fellow !
 One who upon the very brink of ruin
 Has sav'd himself by playing well his game.³

Eur. I gave our citizens prudential habits

¹ *Dress'd in trappings,
 And rattling bells to terrify the audience.*

Alluding to some characters which Æschylus had introduced dressed out thus absurdly to terrify the audience. The poet might here have touched upon the representation of his Furies, where those goddesses were introduced with such a terrific chorus of attendants, as had the greatest effect upon the spectators, and even caused the women with child to miscarry. This gave occasion to a law that reduced the number of the chorus from fifty to fifteen.

² *Phormisius, — Megænetus.* The former of these is mentioned by the scholiast to have been a man of very rough unpolished manners and appearance ; the latter as a stupid character.

³ *By playing well his game.* Οἱ Χῖος ἀλλὰ Κίος. When the islands of Cia and Chios were at war with each other, it is

By dramas form'd to lead them to reflection,
 And such consideration, as might teach them
 A gen'ral knowledge and superior skill,
 As well in other matters, as to manage
 Their household business better than before,
 By making due inquiry, "How is this?"
 "Where is that gone?" "Who carried off the other?"

Bac. Just so;—and now each of our citizens
 Ent'ring his house thus bawls out to his servants,
 "Where is the crock? Who eat the pilchard's head?
 "The kettle that was new last year is spoil'd.
 "What is become of yesterday's garlic?
 "Who has been eating up the oil?"—Mean-time
 Mere gaping boobies they, and senseless dolts!

Chor. Can the chief renown'd and bold,
 Can Achilles this behold?¹

said by the scholiast, that this Theramenes, (whose versatility Aristophanes has already celebrated in this comedy) was occasionally resident at each, and called himself either a Ciani or a Chian as he happened to be at either of those places. But with the emendation of *Kῶος* for *Κίος* (as suggested by Eustathius) the words refer to a lucky throw of the dice when the game is desperate, and most probably allude to his conduct at the trial of the admirals after the engagement off the Arginusian isles, when Theramenes, who deserved the most blame, as was mentioned in a preceding note, became their accuser, and exculpated himself.

¹ *Can the chief renown'd and bold,
 Can Achilles this behold?*

This is taken from the "Myrmidons" of Æschylus. The passage is preserved by Harpocration.

Say what answer wilt thou form?
 Yet beware lest passion's storm
 Rising in thy fiery soul
 Scorn discretion's just control.
 Though with bitt'rest envy he
 Point th' envenom'd charge at thee,
 Noble prince, his rage disdain,
 Nor retort in furious strain.
 Rather 'fore the fav'ring gale
 Reef thy canvass, furl thy sail,
 And thy course with caution keep
 'Midst the dangers of the deep.

Now then, builder of the rhyme,¹
 First of Greeks to th' tragic theme
 That gav'st its stately dress and style sublime,
 Pour forth with confidence thy sounding stream.

SCENE II.

ÆSCHYLUS, EURIPIDES, BACCHUS.

Æsch. Truly I feel indignant at this meeting;
 My stomach rises at the very thought

¹ *Builder of the rhyme.* The same expression occurs in an Epigram of Antipater upon Æschylus, as cited by Bergler,

Ὁ τραγικὸν φώνημα, καὶ ὀκρυόεσσαν ἀοιδίην
 Πυργώσας στιβάρεν πρῶτος ἐν εὐεπίῃ.

“ Who first the tragic strain and lofty rhyme
 “ Built in the noblest style of poesy.

Of such a disputation ;—but lest he
Should speak of me as wanting what to say,
Inform me thou, on what account it is
The poet claims superior admiration.

Eur. Genius and skill ; when they're employ'd to make
Men better members of society.

Æsch. But if neglecting this, o' th' contrary,
Thou hast the good and virtuous corrupted,
Say what the punishment thou meritest.

Bac. To go to hell.¹ 'Twere wrong t' apply to him.

Æsch. Consider how thou first receiv'dst them from me
In stature tall, in disposition noble,
Not sculking from their duty, nor yet vers'd
In market tricks, as now, nor rogues, nor villains,
But breathing swords and spears and plumed crests,
Helmets and greaves, and arm'd with sev'nfold souls.²

Eur. This might produce more harm than good.

Bac. This fellow
Will surely stun me, talking of his helmets.

Eur. How mad'st thou them so valiant? By what
means?

Bac. Inform us, Æschylus ; but tell it calmly.

¹ *To go to hell.* Τελύδαναι. The scholiast and commentators all observe upon the wit of this passage, the scene being in the shades. I have endeavored to preserve the joke, such as it is, in the translation.

² *Sev'nfold souls.* The poet closes well Æschylus's pompous description of the valorous spirit of the Athenians under the influence of his performances, by giving them *sevenfold souls*, borrowing his epithet from the shield of Ajax, as described by Homer, II. vii.

Æsch. By making war the subject of my drama.

Eur. Of which, I pray?

Æsch. The seven chiefs 'gainst Thebes,—¹
Which no one ever saw perform'd, but felt
Himself inspir'd with military ardor.

Eur. In this thou didst the state an injury,
By giving warlike ardor to the Thebans;
Be therefore stripes thy only recompense.

Æsch. 'Twas in your power to train yourselves to arms,
As well as they; but you inclin'd not to them.—
Then, when my Persians² I exhibited,
I taught the people 'gainst their enemies
To burn for conquest, with consummate skill
Gracing that matchless work.

Bac. 'Twas entertaining,
To hear the chorus, in such solemn strains³
Clapping their hands, evoke Darius' ghost.

¹ *The seven chiefs 'gainst Thebes.* Mr. Potter in the preface to the very spirited translation of this tragedy observes, that Æschylus particularly valued himself upon it, and adds, "not without reason; for it has all that bold painting, with which we might expect his genius would embellish such a subject."

² *My Persians.* Another masterly tragedy of Æschylus.

³ *To hear the chorus, in such solemn strains.* The translation I have given of this passage is in conformity to the idea of the learned Spanheim, who understands the words *περὶ Δαρίου τοῦ τελευήτορος* as relating to the ghost of Darius, which is evoked by the chorus in the *ὕμνος ψυχολωγῶδες* which they sing. Mr. Stanley, the editor of Æschylus, observes, that nothing could be more in character than these rites, this *νεκυ-*

Æsch. Such subjects best become the poet's song.—
 Mark we the labors of each gen'rous bard
 From the first dawn of poesy, we find
 Instruction ever was their end and aim.
 Orpheus the holy myst'ries and the guilt
 Of slaughter taught; Musæus¹ oracles
 And healing arts; Hesiod² agriculture,
 Harvest, and seed-time; the god-like Homer,
 Whence gain'd he honor and superior fame,
 But that to noblest themes he tun'd his song,
 Heroic ardor, military skill,
 And all the various use of arms?

Bac. Yet he
 Forgot t' instruct the foolish Pantacles

ομαντεία, among a people so addicted to magical incantations as the Persians were. Aristophanes however could not forbear a laugh at the whole business of the ghost.

¹ *Orpheus, Musæus.* Orpheus was said to be a poet, musician, and physician, and to have been the founder of the mysteries. He is mentioned by Euripides in his "Rhesus," (v. 943.) as having celebrated them. His history is much confused with that of his master Linus and his scholar Musæus, and their existence is in general disbelieved. The poetry we have, that goes under their names, is clearly of a much later date:

² *Hesiod.* Pliny mentions Hesiod to have been the first poet that wrote upon agriculture. Virgil professes himself to have been his imitator,

"Ascræumque cano Romana per oppida carmen."

In this, but makes him first put on his helmet,
And then his crest.¹

Æsch. How many have I train'd
To glory, 'mongst them the brave Lamachus!—²
By Homer first inspir'd,³ the gallant deeds
Of brave Patroclus, Teucer, and Thymalion,
I sang to fire each valiant citizen
With emulation of their fame, whene'er

¹ *But makes him first put on his helmet,
And then his crest.*

This observation does the comic poet no great credit, if he really means to ridicule these lines of Homer.

Κρατὶ δ' ἐπ' ἰφθίμῳ κυνέην εὐτυχτον ἔθηκεν,
Ἴππουριν· θεινὸν δὲ λόφος καθύπερθεν ἔνευε.

II. III. 337.

“ His youthful face a polish'd helm o'erspread,
“ The waving horse-hair nodded on his head.” POPE.

May we not suppose that this paltry remark is put purposely in the mouth of Bacchus, as an oblique reflexion on the ignorance of those who were appointed to decide upon poetical compositions?

² *The brave Lamachus.* One of the best of their generals, killed a few years before the representation of this comedy. That he was a truly military character appears from an answer which he made to one of his captains, who, being reprimanded by him for some neglect, promised to be more attentive for the future; “ No,” says he, “ war will admit of no second fault.”

³ *By Homer first inspir'd.* *Æschylus* is said to have imbibed his inclination for poetry from reading *Homer*.

The trumpet sounds : but never have exhibited
 A wanton Phædra,¹ or a Sthenobæa ;²
 Nor am I conscious ever to have drawn
 A single woman influenc'd by love.³

Eur. No truly ! Venus has no power o'er thee.

Æsch. Nor may she ever have ! O'er thee and thine
 Great be her sway. 'Twas she that brought thee here.

Bac. 'Tis even so ; for whatsoe'er thou'st feign'd
 Respecting others, thou'st thyself experienc'd.⁴

¹ *Phædra.* The wife of Theseus, a principal character in the "Hippolytus" of Euripides, the subject of which tragedy is her falling in love with Hippolytus the son of Theseus by an Amazon, and her attempt to seduce him ; in which not being able to succeed, she destroyed herself, forming at the same time a scheme for his ruin.

² *Sthenobæa.* A tragedy of Euripides that is lost. A similar story to the preceding one. She was the wife of Prætus, king of Argos, and became enamored of her husband's guest, Bellerophon, but, he refusing to listen to her, she became his accuser, the purpose of which being discovered, she poisoned herself.

³ *A single woman influenc'd by love.* Spanheim expresses his astonishment that the poet should make Æschylus assert this, when he has drawn Clytæmnestra, in his "Agamemnon," murdering her husband for the sake of Ægysthus.

⁴ *Thou'st thyself experienc'd.* Euripides was twice married, but was so unsuccessful in his choice, that the harsh terms in which he frequently speaks of the female sex, and the bad light in which he has drawn them, have been ascribed to the ill opinion he was induced to entertain of women in general from the licentious conduct of his own wives.

Eur. How do my Sthenobæas hurt the state?

Æsch. Why many ladies of illustrious birth,¹
Nobly espous'd, through thee have swallow'd hemlock
From conscious shame, when thy Bellerophon
They saw presented.

Eur. With respect to Phædra,
Did I not paint that story as I found it?

Æsch. Ev'n so;—but surely it behoves a poet
Rather to hide a tale of infamy,
'Than to produce and publish it abroad.
Children indeed are taught by school-masters;
The poet is the riper youth's preceptor.
It therefore much behoves us that our dramas
Be so compos'd as to afford instruction.

Eur. And didst thou then design thy bloated style
Fill'd with such monstrous mountainous expressions
For their instruction?—Surely it became thee
To use the language of a human being.

Æsch. Elevated thoughts and noble sentiments
Of course produce a correspondent diction:
Heroes besides with much propriety
May use a language rais'd above the vulgar,
Just as they wear a more superb attire;—
Which when I show'd thee, thou hast done most foully.

Eur. In what?

¹ *Many ladies of illustrious birth, &c.* Kuster from the Vatic. MS. instead of *Γενναίους καὶ γενναίας ἀνδρῶν ἀλόχους* gives us the emendation of *Γενναίας καὶ γενναίων ἀνδρῶν*, which saves this passage from the absurdity of making the men, as well as women, imitate Sthenobæa and swallow poison.

Æsch. Why first in dressing up thy kings
In rags,¹ to make them objects of compassion.

Eur. Where is the harm in that?

Æsch. On that account
No rich man now will undertake the office
Of Trierarch,² but each goes meanly clad,
Laments his fate and vows he's very poor.

Bac. But yet he'll wear the finest under-garments,
And, having gull'd you thus, turn to the fish-shops.³

¹ *In dressing up thy kings in rags.* Another allusion to his bringing Telephus upon the stage dressed as a beggar. Telephus was the son of Hercules and Auge, and king of the Mysians; being wounded by the spear of Achilles, he was told by the oracle, he could only be cured by the spear which gave the wound; for which purpose he went to the Grecian camp disguised like a beggar.

² *The office of Trierarch.* This was an expensive office. The trierarchs were obliged to provide all sorts of necessaries for the fleet, and to build ships. To this office no certain number of men was appointed; but they were increased, or diminished, according to the value of their estates and the exigencies of the common-wealth. Aristophanes makes Æschylus mention this as an instance of the bad consequences which must arise from representing upon the stage (as Euripides had done) persons of rank in inferior situations; one effect of which would be its depressing that laudable ambition, which induces people to live and act up to their rank in life, and destroying that just and proper pride, which is highly conducive to the public good.

³ *Turn to the fish-shops.* Fish seem to have been considered by the Athenians as the greatest luxury which came to

Æsch. Besides thou taught'st the people to apply
 Their whole attention to acquire the graces
 Of polish'd language and refin'd expression.
 And hence the wrestling-schools are quite deserted,
 While prating boys are sunk in prostitution,¹
 And sailors mutiny against their leaders:—
 These in my time were only skill'd to ask
 For biscuit, and to cry, yare, yare!

Bac. Ev'n so;—
 Or on the rowers or their mess-mates play
 Their filthy jokes; and when on shore turn robbers.
 These now become fine-spoken gentlemen,²
 And scorn to mind the business of the ship.

to their tables; in purchasing the more delicate sorts of which they went to a considerable expense.

There is a very satirical stroke upon the Athenians for their luxury in this article in our author's comedy of the "Knights;" where he makes them break up a public assembly, and refuse to listen to a deputy from Lacedæmon with an offer of peace, because they had just been told, that the most delicate sort of fish were then selling uncommonly cheap.

¹ *And hence the wrestling-schools are quite deserted,
 While prating boys are sunk in prostitution.*

This is meant to show the bad effects of an affectation of refined language, which leads to a neglect of manly exercises and superinduces all kinds of vicious habits.

² *Fine-spoken gentlemen.* Euripides is here charged with having corrupted the language of the common people. Our author has before used *ἀντιλόγια* for the dramatic dialogue, and *ἀντιλέγει* here signifies *to speak in a theatrical or pompous style.*

Æsch. What mischiefs may not be imputed to him?
 What shameless characters has he produc'd!—
 Vile panders, women bringing forth in temples,¹
 Others cohabiting with their own brothers,—²
 And some who speak of life and death as equal:³
 And hence our city teems with wretched scribblers,⁴
 Buffoons, and jugglers, who seduce the people
 From each ingenuous exercise, that now
 None in the games can bear a torch with credit.

Bac. Not they—I thought I should have died with
 laughing,

¹ *Women bringing forth in temples.* The scholiast says, Auge, the mother of Telephus, was thus described by Euripides. Diodorus Siculus says she was delivered of him in a wood.

² *Cohabiting with their own brothers.* An allusion to the story of Macareus and Canace mentioned before.

³ *And some who speak of life and death as equal.* Among the fragments of his “Polyidus” are two lines supposed to be here alluded to, of which Mr. Woodhull has given us the translation:

“Who knows but life may justly be esteem'd
 “A state of death, and death the blest commencement
 “Of fresh existence in the shades below?”

⁴ *And hence our city teems with wretched scribblers.* He supposes the manners of the age were corrupted by these improper representations, in which Euripides had drawn many of his characters vicious and profligate—had exhibited others in very unbecoming situations, and put very improper sentiments in their mouths.

When late I saw at the Panathenæa
 A bloated clumsy figure of a man,
 Tumbling along, a mile behind the rest,
 With most ridiculous and uncouth gestures.
 The mob indeed did stoutly buffet him¹
 Both back and belly, 'till the beaten wretch,
 His torch extinguish'd, in disgrace retreated.

CHORUS.

Strophe. Hark, where the storms of battle rise,
 Hark, how the war begins to rage!
 'Tis difficult t'adjudge the prize
 When such mighty chiefs engage,
 One to attack nor ignorant nor slow,
 The other quick to parry and return the blow.
 Tread not the beaten path too long,
 While various efforts to your skill belong;
 Freely your specimens impart
 Of modern taste or ancient art,
 Nor fear to chant your tuneful harmony,
 But hazard each bold flight of poesy.

Antistrophe. Fear ye not that your strains ye pour²
 To those, whose rude and unform'd taste

¹ *Did stoutly buffet him.* In the torch-race (a description of which has been given in a former note) when either of the runners, through fear of extinguishing his torch by too violent a motion, slackened his pace, the spectators used to strike him with the palms of their hands.

² *Fear ye not that your strains ye pour
 To those, whose rude and unform'd taste.*

These ironical compliments on the taste of the audience are a

Will disregard your tuneful lore ;
 Those days of ignorance are past.
 War was their study once ; that laid aside,
 Learning's their boast, and books are now their pride.
 By nature amply blest they share
 Bright genius and endowments rare ;
 Now too improvement's aid they join
 Their inbred powers to refine :
 Then fear not want of critic skill in these,
 But nobly strive their polish'd taste to please.

ACT V. SCENE I.

EURIPIDES, BACCHUS, ÆSCHYLUS.

Eur. NOW to thy prologues¹ will I turn, and first,
 As the first part of ev'ry tragedy,
 Their merit try. In opening his subjects
 He was notorious for obscurity.

Bac. Which wilt thou try ?

Eur. I cannot say how many.
 Recite us that about Orestes there.

Bac. Keep silence ev'ry one ;—now, Æschylus !

Æsch. “ Infernal Mercury,² exact observer

severe satire on the decay of military spirit among the Athenians.

¹ *Prologues.* The Greeks called the openings of their tragedies, prologues.

² “ *Infernal Mercury.*” The beginning of Æschylus's

Of a much-honor'd sire, protect and aid me ;
I come again, returning to my country."

Bac. What fault's in this ?

Eur. Above a dozen.

Bac. How ?

They're but three lines.

Eur. Why each has twenty faults.

Bac. I pray thee, *Æschylus*, be silent ; else
Thou'lt have more lines than these to answer for.

Æsch. Silent for him ?

Bac. If thou'rt advis'd by me.

Eur. Why his first verse is nonsense absolute.

Æsch. Thou triflest sure.

Bac. I care not much about it.

tragedy of the *Choephoraë*, where *Orestes*, returned from banishment and standing by the tomb of his father, first implores the protection of *Mercury*, as the conductor of the dead to the shades below, and then addresses his father's manes. As it was necessary to preserve the *equivoque* of the expressions, on which the following *ingenious* criticisms of the poet turn, I could not avail myself of *Potter's* masterly translation of *Æschylus* ; I therefore subjoin his opening of this tragedy :

O thou that to the regions of the dead
Bearest thy father's high behests, O hear,
Hear, *Mercury*, thy suppliant, protect
And save me ; for I come, from exile come,
Revisiting my country. Thou dread shade,
At whose high tomb I bow, shade of my father,
Hear me, O hear!——

Æsch. How say'st thou? Nonsense?

Eur. Pray, begin again.

Æsch. "Infernal Mercury, exact observer
Of a much-honor'd sire,"—

Eur. Orestes speaks this
At his dead father's tomb?

Æsch. I mean it so.

Eur. What! calls he that rogue Mercury t'observe?¹
How his sire fell, slain by a woman's hand?

Æsch. Not him, but he address'd that Mercury,
Whose useful office lies beneath the earth.²

And this he manifestly says, declaring
He was thereto appointed by his sire.

Eur. This nonsense is beyond my expectation.
If from his father he receiv'd th' appointment
To this same office under ground—

Bac. Why then—
He would become his grave-digger.

Æsch. O Bacchus!
Thou drinkest vapid wine.³

¹ *What! calls he that rogue Mercury t' observe.* No one of the heathen Deities had so many offices ascribed to him as Mercury. Euripides here supposes that Orestes is made to call upon him as the god of thieves and villains, and as such acquainted with all their tricks, to help him to inspect his father's body; that he might discover how he was murdered.

² *Whose useful office lies beneath the earth.*

Tu pias lætis animas reponis

Sedibus———

HOR.

³ *Thou drinkest vapid wine.* i. c. Thou art so void of

Bac. Repeat the rest ;
And thou observe each fault.

Æsch. —“ Protect and aid me ;
I come again, returning to my country.”¹

Eur. The wise *Æschylus* deals in tautology.

Bac. Tautology ?

Eur. Mark thou the words ; I'll show thee.
“ I come again returning to my country.”¹
Where to *return* and *come again* must mean
The self-same thing.

Bac. In truth thou'rt right. Why I
As well might ask my neighbor, that he'd lend me
A kneading-trough, or tub to knead my bread in.

Æsch. Not so, my chatt'ring sir, there is in this
A plain and palpable distinction.

Eur. How ?
Prithee inform me how thou mak'st it out.

Æsch. We say he *comes* into his country, who,
Not having forfeited his native rights,
An egress thence and regress free enjoys ;
From exile he *returns*.—

Bac. By *Phœbus* ! well ;
What say'st thou now, *Euripides* ?

Eur. I say
Return is here improper ;² for *Orestes*

taste, that though god of wine, thou canst not distinguish
good from bad.

¹ *I come again returning to my country.*

“Ηκω καὶ κατέρχομαι.

² *Return is here improper.* Any person, who, after having

Came secretly, not having gain'd permission.

Bac. By Hermes, well!—tho' I dont comprehend it.¹

Eur. Now for the rest.

Bac. Aye quickly, Æschylus;—

And be thou sure to criticise him stoutly.

Æsch. "On this sepulcral mount² I stand, and summon
My father's shade to hear, and hearken to me."

Eur. Again the very same; "to hear and hearken."³

Tautology most manifest.—

Bac. Thou wretch!

Why he was speaking to the dead, and they

been driven from his native country, was enabled to return and reside there, was said *κατίεχέσθαι*. But Euripides censures Æschylus for applying this expression improperly to Orestes, who had returned by stealth only and was afraid to appear openly at Argos, where Ægisthus, the murderer of his father and his own avowed enemy, held the sovereign power.

¹ *By Hermes, well!—tho' I dont comprehend it.* There is something highly ridiculous in this want of decision in Bacchus, who seems to be always on the side of him that spoke last; even when he does not understand the observation. This is meant to ridicule the ignorance and incapacity of the judges, whose business it was to decide on the merit of poetic compositions.

² *On this sepulcral mount.* It was customary with the ancients to raise a mount upon the graves of great persons; which Lucan mentions speaking of the Egyptians:

Et regum cineres extructo monte quiescunt.

³ *To hear and hearken.*

Κλύειν, ἀκουσαι.

Not even three-fold repetitions hear. ¹

Æsch. How open'dst thou thy pieces ?

Eur. I will show thee ;

And if thou find'st a single repetition,

Or aught cramm'd in that's foreign to the purpose, ²

¹ *Not even three-fold repetitions hear.* The ancients believed that the ghosts of men, who were deprived of funeral obsequies, could have no admittance into Elysium for a hundred years ; and that when any man had perished at sea, or in any other manner so that his body could not be found, the only method of giving him repose was to erect a sepulchre and call his ghost three times with a loud voice to the habitation prepared for it.

Virgil makes Æneas perform this office to Deiphobus.

Tunc egomet tumulum Rhætæo in littore inanem

Constitui, et magnâ Manes ter voce vocavi. Lib. 6. 505.

Thy tomb I rais'd on the Rhætæan coast,

And thrice aloud I call'd thy wand'ring ghost.

Ausonius alludes to the same custom. *Præf. ad Parental.* P. 102. Ed. Delph.

Ille etiam, mæsti cui defuit urna sepulcri,

Nomine ter dicto pene sepultus erit ;

Whome'er the rites of sepulture have fail'd,

By no sad friends to the drear vault convey'd,

Thrice be his ghost with invocations hail'd,

In part the fun'ral obsequies are paid.

Such were the opinions and customs of the ancients, at which the comic poet could not forbear a laugh.

² *And if thou find'st a single repetition,*

Or aught cramm'd in that's foreign to the purpose.

This is meant as an ironical reflection upon Euripides who, as

Ev'n spit upon me.

Bac. Come begin ; while I

Mark the correctness of thy prologue-lines.

Eur. " At first was *Œdipus* a happy man." ¹

Æsch. Not he, but miserable from his birth ;
Of whom ere he was born, or ev'n begot,

Bergler well observes, is more liable to censure in this respect than *Æschylus*.

¹ " *At first was *Œdipus* a happy man.*" This appears to have been the opening of the *Antigone* of Euripides. For the translation of these lines I am indebted to Mr. Woodhull's elegant and correct version of the tragedies and fragments of that poet. Wherever I could, I have availed myself of his assistance ; but the purposes, for which the different parts of Euripides's pieces are introduced, have often obliged me to give a closer translation. *Œdipus* was the son of *Laius* and *Jocasta* ; of whom it was foretold, that he should slay his father. To prevent this he was exposed in the woods, being suspended by his feet from a tree, which occasioned such a swelling, that he was thence called *Οἰδίπους*. Being preserved by a shepherd, he was brought to Corinth, and there educated at the court of *Polybus*. When he was grown up, he quitted Corinth to inform himself of his parentage, and meeting with his father *Laius* by accident, on a trivial quarrel slew him. A short time after, having delivered his country from the *Sphinx*, a monster that infested it, he married *Jocasta*, and became possessed of the crown of Thebes. The calamitous events, which happened to him and his descendants by this incestuous marriage, have been seized by the three Greek tragic writers as the most capital subjects for displaying their great and various abilities.

Apollo told that he should slay his father.—

How then was he “at first a happy man?”

Eur. “But in the sequel he, alas! became
Of all mankind most wretched.”

Æsch. Not *became*;

For it appears that he was always so.

A new-born infant in an earthen vessel

They to the wint’ry storms expos’d him, lest

Nurtur’d and rais’d to manhood he should be

His father’s murd’rer; to Polybus’ court

Then, his legs swoln, with pain he scarcely crawl’d;

After some time he married an old woman,

Himself still young; she to complete the whole

Prov’d his own mother; then he tore his eyes out.

Bac. Better he’d been with Erasinides.¹

Eur. Mere trifling this. My prologues do me credit.

Æsch. Not they; yet I shall not examine them

With all the forms of verbal criticism,

But try them by applying any words

Adapted to chime in with thy sweet strains.²

¹ *Better he’d been with Erasinides.* Another reflection on the cruelty of the measure in the condemnation and execution of the admirals, one of whom was the Erasinides here mentioned.

² *But try them by applying any words*

Adapted to chime in with thy sweet strains.

I have taken some latitude in the translation of this part, to make the meaning of the comic poet more intelligible. His design here is to show that Euripides was chiefly studious in his compositions of a certain correctness of numbers, and

Eur. My prologues to be try'd by such a test !

Æsch. By nothing else. In truth they're so compos'd,
That join we to them any jingling words
Which suit the metre, they'll ne'er hurt the sense.
I'll prove it to thee instantly.

Eur. Thou'lt prove it ?

Æsch. Ev'n so.

Bac. But thou must first repeat some lines.

Eur. “ *Ægyptus*, as fame's loudest voice relates,
With fifty sons in his advent'rous bark,
Landing at Argos,”¹

Æsch. Lost his candlestick.²

that his versification owed all its beauty to a cadence he much affected. To prove this, Æschylus says, he will take any set of words that will suit for the conclusion of an Iambic verse, and let Euripides repeat as many of his prologues as he pleased, he would engage to affix them to one of the first three lines and neither the versification or sense should be injured by it.

¹ “ *Ægyptus*, as fame's loudest voice, &c.” From the Archelaus of Euripides.

² *Lost his candlestick.* I have endeavored to preserve the ridiculous effect of the original, by translating the Greek *λαμπάδιον* or *little lamp*, a candlestick.

I am however inclined to suspect, that the words *λαμπάδιον ἀπώλεσεν* are not merely a metrical completion of an Iambic verse, but have also a meaning equivalent to the Latin proverb “ *Oleum perdidit*—he has wasted his lamp-oil,” i. e. misused his time, and that they contain a reflection on Euripides for the great pains he took in finishing his compositions—by the

Bac. What about candlestick? Plague take the fellow!
Try him again. Let's know what he'd be at.

Eur. "In fawn-skin clad¹ and brandishing his thyrsus,
Bacchus, who on Parnassus' piny steep
Leads his brisk chorus,"—

Æsch. Lost his candlestick.

Bac. Again he hit us with his candlestick.

Eur. No matter! Here is one to which I'm certain
He never will be able to apply it.—
"There's no man who in all respects is blest;²
Either he's nobly born, yet poor; or sprung
From abject fathers—"

Æsch. Lost his candlestick.

Bac. Euripides!

Eur. What now?

Bac. I think I see thee
Short'ning thy sails, as fearful of a storm.

Eur. By Ceres! it affects me not the least;—
This very time, I warrant, it shall fail him.

Æsch. Let's hear it. But beware o'th' candlestick.

Eur. "Bending his steps from Sidon's city,³ Cadmus,
Sprung from Agenor"—

Æsch. Lost his candlestick.

frequent polishing and retouching of which Aristophanes
would insinuate he had destroyed all their spirit and vigor.

¹ "In fawn-skin clad." From his Hypsipyle.

² "There's no man who in all respects is blest."
From his Sthenobæa.

³ "Bending his steps from Sidon's city." From his
Phryxus.

Bac. Poor fellow ! can'st not buy this candlestick,
Before he mar our prologues with it quite ?

Eur. Buy it of him ?

Bac. 'Tis what I would advise.

Eur. Truly not I. I've prologues still in plenty,
To which I'm sure he never can affix it.—

“ The son of Tantalus to Pisa borne ¹

By rapid coursers”—

Æsch. Lost his candlestick.

Bac. Again he introduc'd the candlestick.
Part with it to him, Æschylus, by all means ;
Thou'lt get an excellent one for an obol.

Eur. Not so, by Jove !—I've many more to come.—
“ I'th' fields when Æneus”— ²

Æsch. Lost his candlestick.

Eur. Pray wait, 'till I've repeated the whole line.
“ I'th' fields when Æneus gath'ring in his sheaves
To offer first fruits”—

Æsch. Lost his candlestick.

Bac. What at the sacrifice ? Did some one steal it ?

Eur. Nay mind him not.—Let him apply it now.—
“ Jove, by that name ³ he justly is address'd”.

Bac. He'll do for thee with this same candlestick.
In truth it makes thy prologues look as strange
As a man's eye with a vast tumor o'er it.—
No more, I pray ; but turn to's choruses.

¹ “ *The son of Tantalus to Pisa.*” From his *Iphigenia in Tauris*.

² “ *I'th' fields when Æneus.*” From his *Meleager*.

³ “ *Jove, by that name.*” From his *Melanippe*.

Eur. There I've sufficient evidence to prove him
A wretched poet, and tautologist.

CHORUS.

What his purpose, what his plan,
 Studious to learn I would inquire ;
Can he criticise the man
 Who has struck the sounding lyre¹
Frequent with a master-hand,
 While to imitate his strain
Our modern bards despairing stand,
 And rarely strive, or strive in vain ?
What accusation he can bring,
What charge against our tragic king,
 'Twill move my wonder much to hear ;
Yet for th' event I must confess my fear.

SCENE II.

EURIPIDES, BACCHUS, ÆSCHYLUS.

Eur. His choruses indeed are most surprising,
As quickly shall appear, for I will treat you
With a concise abridgment of them all.

Bac. And I'll keep count of his tautologies.

¹ *Who has struck the sounding lyre.* The tragedies of Æschylus abound more with choruses than those of either of his countrymen. His lyric parts are always sublime and poetical, sometimes rather obscure.

THE FROGS.

ODE and SYSTEM.¹

An Overture is performed with flutes.

Eur. Phthian Achilles! while we tell

Our tale of war and misery,

In battle how our valiant heroes fell,

To heal our woes wilt thou thy aid deny?

Beside this lake our votive race

Pay hallow'd rites to Mercury;

From him our honor'd ancestry we trace—

To heal our woes wilt thou thy aid deny?

Bac. A brace of woes already, Æschylus.

Eur. Hail, valiant chief! thy warlike train

That oft hast led to victory,

To hear my word, O son of Atreus, deign—

To heal our woes wilt thou thy aid deny?

Bac. Here's woe again repeated for the third time.

Eur. O ye, th' industrious bees who guard,²

Hallow your lips with purity,

¹ *Ode and system.* This is a most unconnected cento from the different choruses of Æschylus. Frischlin in his argument prefixed to this comedy gives a description of this part, which may explain it better than any thing I can say—
“A prologis ad choros transeunt; quos, ut perperam ab Æschylo factos Euripides demonstret, ipse ex diversis ejusdem tragædiis varia carmina ridicule consuit, quibus odiosas repetitiones annectit. Sed eandem illi et parem gratiam, idque majori cum venustate, reponit Æschylus.

² *Th' industrious bees who guard.* Among the νηφάλια ἑργα, or sober sacrifices of the Grecians, were μελισσπονδα or libations of honey.

Be Dian's sacred portal now unbar'd—
To heal our woes wilt thou thy aid deny?

'Tis mine the omen to relate,
And in the sacred mystery

Point out the fav'ring auspices of fate—
To heal our woes wilt thou thy aid deny?

Bac. Great Jove! Why, what a heap of woes are here!
I'll to the bath. This nonsense makes my back ache.

Eur. Nay, not before thou'st heard another strain
Compos'd for th' accompaniment of th' harp.¹

Æsch. Let's hear; but do not tack thy woes to't, pray.

Eur. Lo where Grecian monarchs twain
Lead their bold and youthful train,
Phlatto-thratto-phlatto-ihrat.²

¹ *Compos'd for th' accompaniment of th' harp.* The recitation of the Greek tragedy has been supposed to have been entirely accompanied by the Cithara. That parts of it were, is certain, as Athenæus (lib. i. ch. 17.) speaks of Sophocles playing the Cithara himself in his tragedy of *Thamyris*. The parts of Æschylus's pieces here introduced are taken from his choruses, which always had musical accompaniments. These, however, we may suppose, were in different styles, and the instruments as well as the music were varied according to the subject-matter of the poetry. The Cithara was of the most powerful kind of the stringed instruments of the ancients, and was probably introduced in those choruses, the subjects of which required a deeper and more sonorous accompaniment, such as the first Chorus in Æschylus's *Agamemnon*, from which some of the following lines are taken.

² *Phlatto-thratto-phlatto-thrat.* This seems to have been an imitation with the mouth of a twanging accompaniment

Before them savage monsters go
 Glaring horror on the foe,
 Phlatto-thratto-phlatto-thrat.
 Mark the furious bird of war
 His vengeful arm and pointed spear,
 Phlatto-thratto-phlatto-thrat.
 While thro' th' air to seek their prey
 Winged dogs pursue their way,
 Phlatto-thratto-phlatto-thrat.

Bac. What's all this Phlatto-thrat? Didst find it pray
 At Marathon, ' or where didst thou collect
 These water-drawers' most harmonious strains?

on the Cithara or harp.—Euripides, whose choruses were mostly of a moral and pathetic kind, is made here to play upon those of Æschylus as being composed in a very pompous and lofty style, merely to produce terror. I have omitted the line τὸ σύγκλινες ἰπ' Αἴαντι in the original, as one of the scholiasts says it is not to be found in some copies, and it is hardly possible to make it have any resemblance to sense.

' ——— *Didst find it pray*

At Marathon.

The scholiast explains this, as alluding to the similarity of sound between the phlatto-thrat and φλεῶς, *sedge*, with which the plains of Marathon, being very marshy, were covered. But, as it was customary for the Greeks to use the Cithara as a martial instrument in their engagements, Bacchus seems here rather to inquire, whether Æschylus learned that accompaniment from the charge which was played upon the Cithara at the battle of Marathon, where he served and distinguished himself much.

Æsch. From the best models I compos'd my choruses,
 And did my best to make them excellent,
 Lest I might seem i'th' fields of poesy
 To mow from the same ground with Phrynicus.—
 His are all stol'n from harlots' filthy songs,
 Melitus' catches ¹ and sad Carian tunes, ²
 From fun'ral dirges, and from choral ballads.
 But I will quickly make this matter clear :—
 Give me a lyre ;—tho' wherefore ask a lyre
 For such a purpose ? Where is she that twangs
 The earthen pitcher ? ³ O be thou present,
 Muse of Euripides ! These tuneful strains
 Are quite adapted to thy style of singing.

Bac. Then I suppose it is not the first time
 This muse has play'd such an unseemly part.

¹ *Melitus' catches.* Suidas and the scholiast say this was the same Melitus that accused Socrates. This should seem to show the falsity of the charge against Aristophanes of being bribed by the accusers of Socrates to expose him in his comedy of the Clouds. Had Aristophanes been so far connected with Melitus, he would hardly have indulged himself in this stroke at him.

² *Sad Carian tunes.* The Carians were considered by the rest of Greece as a barbarous and unpolished people. They are accordingly called by Homer βαρβαρόφωνοι. Suidas says they were used to sing at funerals for hire.

³ *The earthen pitcher.* The lower sort of people for want of musical instruments used to beat the tune of their songs on any earthen vessel. Here then he seems to call upon the muse of Euripides, as a low and paltry muse accustomed to such performances.

Æsch. Ye Halcyons, ¹ who the ceaseless waves among,
 Moist'ning your plumes of loveliest hue
 In ocean's briny dew,
 Send forth your highly-finish'd song!
 Ye spiders, tenants of the vaulted roof,
 Who weave in tuneful strain
 With many-twinkling feet your curious woof!
 While the Dolphin, pleas'd to hear
 Music's sweet numbers rising on his ear,
 Rolls him o'er the azure main
 To distant shores and oracles divine,
 And all the joys which crown the cluster'd vine.
 Give me thy hand, my lad. Dost mind the strain?

Bac. I do.

Æsch. This wond'rous strain?

Bac. Most certainly.

Æsch. How dar'st thou then, when such thy compositions,

To censure mine, thou poor mechanic poet?
 Such are thy choruses.—I now proceed
 To inquire into thy style of monodies.
 Wrapp'd in clouds of pitchy hue, ²

¹ *Ye Halcyons.* A cento from the works of Euripides, meant to ridicule his affectation of refined versification.

² *Wrapp'd in clouds of pitchy hue.* This genuine story of a Cock and a Bull is intended as a banter on Euripides's style of monodies, or his introduction of lyric numbers in the dialogue part, the low subjects of his compositions, and his general affectation of painting after nature.

Ebon night !¹ what vision dire
 Call'st thou now before my view
 From the murky shades below
 Tenfold horrors to inspire ?
 What vacant shape rais'd by thy power,
 His robes bedipt in sable woe,
 What offspring of the midnight hour
 Lifts his savage fangs on high
 With looks of dread ferocity ?
 Quick the torch's friendly light,
 Ye damsels, bring ; the vase quick fill
 From the pure fountain's crystal rill ;
 Let the fire's enkindling heat
 Make the pure ablution meet
 To purge away the ominous dream of night.²

¹ *Ebon night.* This has been supposed to allude to a passage in the *Hecuba* of Euripides, v. 68.

——O night in tenfold darkness wrapt, .
 By such terrific phantoms from my couch
 Why am I fear'd ? Thou venerable earth !
 Parent of dreams that flit on raven wing,
 The vision I abhor which I in sleep
 This night have seen.

WOODHULL.

² *To purge away the ominous dream of night.* So Atossa in the *Persians* of Æschylus, v. 152.

This was the dreadful vision of the night.
 When I arose, in the sweet flowing stream
 I bath'd my hands.

POTTER.

Noctem flumine purgas.

PERSIUS.

God of the waves! what do I see?
 The dreadful portents now their tale unfold;
 Alas! my neighbors pity me!
 How true the horrid dream foretold!
 Glyce, that wicked wretch, has stole
 And carried off my fav'rite fowl:
 Ye mountain-nymphs, pursue the shameless thief,
 And thou, O madness, bring a wretch relief.
 Ah hapless me! who all the while
 The whizzing thread with busy fingers drew,
 Intent on nothing but my ceaseless toil,
 Pleas'd that the swelling roll more pond'rous grew,
 Which to the market I design'd to bear
 Ere dawn'd the morning's purple ray,
 While twilight scarcely mark'd the coming day,
 To sell the labor'd produce of my care.
 He's gone, he's gone,
 On lightest pinions borne,
 Away to heaven he's flown,
 While naught remains for me but endless woe,
 His loss perpetually to mourn,
 And bid my streaming tears for ever, ever flow.
 Youths of Ida, sons of Crete,¹
 Seize your bows, revenge my wrong;
 Quickly ply your nimble feet;
 Thou too, goddess of the chase,
 Fair Dictynna,² with us go,

¹ *Youths of Ida, sons of Crete.* This and the following line are among the fragments of Euripides's Cretan Priests.

² *Dictynna.* A Cretan nymph so called from δίκτυον, a net, either because she was the inventress of hunting nets, or

Hie we to her dwelling-place,
 And search the house above, below.—
 Hecate, our way along
 Lift thy radiant torches high,
 Light us the mansion to surround,
 To seize again my property,
 And punish her on whom the stolen goods are found.

Bac. Give o'er these strains.

Æsch. In truth I'm satisfied.

Now to the scales I'll bring him, which alone
 Our merit in the drama shall determine,
 And prove the weight of our expressions.

Bac. Come !

I'll weigh the skill of these distinguish'd poets
 With the exactness of a cheese-monger.

CHORUS.

Genius and labor often join;
 But what's this new and strange design,
 The wildest folly e'er conceiv'd?
 The tale I'll swear I'd not believ'd
 If any one had told it me;
 For so improbable 'twould seem,
 The whole a fiction I should deem
 Of merriment and pleasantry.

as having been caught in a fisherman's net when she flung herself into the sea to avoid the pursuit of Minos. She was a follower of Diana, and the Cretans worshipped her for that goddess.

SCENE III.

BACCHUS, ÆSCHYLUS, EURIPIDES.

Bac. Now stand ye round the scales.

Æsch. Behold me ready.

Bac. Let each produce his verse; but be ye sure
Ye let not go the scales, 'till I cry "cuckoo."

Æsch. We are prepar'd.

Bac. Approach the scales and speak.

Eur. "Ah! would to heav'n the Argo ne'er had
flown."—¹

Æsch. "Ye fertile meads lav'd by Spercheios'
stream!"—²

Bac. "Cuckoo"—there, let them go. Æschylus' scale
Outweighs the other much.—

Eur. How happens that?

Bac. 'Tis owing to his putting in a river,
Moist'ning his words, as do the wool-staplers,
Who wet their wool to make it weigh the heavier;—
Thy verse was but a flying one.

Eur. Once more

Let him produce a verse 'gainst one of mine.

Bac. Take hold again.

Eur. I'm ready.

¹ "Ah! would to heav'n the Argo, &c." The first line of the Medea of Euripides.

² "Ye fertile meads lav'd by Spercheios' stream." A line out of the Philoctetes of Æschylus.

Bac. Let us hear.

Eur. "Persuasion hath no shrine but eloquence"—¹

Æsch. "The only power that scorns our gifts is death"—²

Bac. Away with them, away! 'Tis his again.—

He put in death, the heaviest of all ills.

Eur. Persuasion I; my verse most excellent.

Bac. Persuasion's a light word, of trifling import.

Seek thou another of superior weight,

Of strength and bulk to weigh the balance down.

¹ "*Persuasion hath no shrine but eloquence.*" From the *Antigone* of Euripides.

Οὐκ ἔστι Πειθοῦς ἱερὸν ἄλλο, πλὴν λόγος,

καὶ βῶμος αὐτῆς ἔστιν ἀνθρώπου φύσις.

Persuasion hath no shrine but eloquence;

Her only altar is the soul of man.

WOODHULL.

² "*The only power that scorns our gifts is death.*" From the *Niobe* of Æschylus. The passage is more fully preserved by Stobæus. I cite it as it seems to answer to the preceding passage of Euripides.

Μόνος θεῶν γὰρ θάνατος οὐ δῶρων ἐργῶν

Οὐ τὰν τι θυῶν, οὐτ' ἐπισπενδῶν λάβοις,

Οὐ βῶμός ἐστιν, οὔτε παιωνίζεται,

Μόνου δὲ πειθῶ δαιμόνων ἀποστάτει.

The only power that scorns our gifts is death:

'Twere vain with sacrifices and libations

To sooth him; he no altar has, nor e'er

Is hymn'd with pæans; but alone on him,

Of all the Gods, persuasion never tries

Her influence,

Eur. Where can I meet with such a one? Where find it?

Bac. Achilles threw two aces and a quatre.¹

Come on. There's but one trial more remaining.

Eur. "His right hand grasp'd a pond'rous iron spear"—²

Æsch. "Chariot on chariot pil'd, and corpse on corpse"—³

Bac. Again he's been too much for thee.

Eur. How so?

Bac. By throwing in two chariots and two corpses,
A weight a hundred slaves could scarcely bear.

Æsch. I've done with single verses; but let him,
Taking his wife and her Cephisopho,
His children and books with him, get i'th' scale;—
Two lines of mine shall weigh against them all.

SCENE IV.

BACCHUS, PLUTO, ÆSCHYLUS, EURIPIDES.

Bac. My friends, I cannot think of giving judgment:
I would not have th' ill-will of either party.

¹ *Achilles threw two aces and a quatre.* A line of Euripides in his *Telephus*, where he had introduced his heroes playing at dice; but, the scene being much ridiculed, he was obliged to expunge it.

² "*His right hand grasp'd, &c.*" From the *Meleager* of Euripides.

³ "*Chariot on chariot pil'd, and corpse on corpse.*" From Æschylus's *Glaucus of Potnia*.

I think the one ingenious, from the other

I have receiv'd the highest entertainment.

Pluto. What then becomes o'th' purpose of thy journey?

Bac. By my deciding how will that be answer'd?

Pluto. Why not to have it fruitless, whichsoe'er
Thou shalt prefer, ev'n take him back with thee.

Bac. Now blessings on thee!—Well then, I'm come
down

To find a poet.

Æsch. Wherefore?

Bac. That the state,
Its dangers past, may have its entertainments.
Now whosoe'er appears best qualified
To give it worthiest counsels, he's my choice.
First then of Alcibiades¹ speak each

¹ *Alcibiades.* Alcibiades was then absent and in disgrace with his countrymen, who were always either idolising him or ready to impeach him. Their disgust against him at this time seems to have been as causeless, as their violent admiration had often been. The fleet in his absence was defeated by Lysander near Ephesus through the imprudence of Antiochus his vice-admiral, who engaged the enemy contrary to his express orders, and fell in the engagement. This, however, brought Alcibiades into disgrace, in consequence of which he retired to a fort he had built in the Chersonese. This had happened more than a year before the representation of this comedy, and it is probable the Athenians, beginning to repent of their injustice towards him, were now disposed to make overtures to him; for it seems they had such an opinion of his abilities that, though they never were easy with him, they

His thoughts ; for sure our state is sore distress'd.

Æsch. What thinks the city of him ?

Bac. What ?—At once

Likes him, dislikes him, and cant live without him.—

But tell me freely what you think of him ?

Eur. I hate the man who, slow to serve his country,

But quick to do it injuries, pursues

His own advantage, useless to the state.

Bac. By Neptune ! excellent. But what say'st thou ?

Æsch. 'Tis wrong to rear a lion's whelp i'th' state,

Much more a lion ;¹ but when once 'tis done,

I hold it right we pay obedience to him.

never thought themselves safe without him. Aristophanes seems therefore cautious of speaking his opinion. He makes Euripides freely attack his want of principles and any real attachment to his country, but in the opinion of Æschylus he seems disposed to reconcile the people to the necessity of availing themselves of his superior abilities.

¹ *'Tis wrong to rear a lion's whelp i'th' state,*

Much more a lion.

This and the foregoing passage

Likes him, dislikes him, and cant live without him,
are cited by Plutarch in his life of Alcibiades, and give us a just idea of his character, who, with abilities to do his country the greatest service, was rendered very dangerous to it by the extreme height of his ambition. This, Aristophanes hints, had been encouraged by the Athenians, who had raised the lion to his present fierceness by their violent partiality to him, particularly their very flattering reception of him after his first retreat from Athens.

Bac. By Guardian Jove! I know not which speaks best.

So wisely one, so openly the other.

Once more then let me ask you your opinions;—

How shall our sinking state be sav'd from ruin?

Eur. If some one tie Cinesias for wings
Unto Cleocritus,¹ that a kind blast
May carry them together o'er the sea.

Bac. 'Twere laughable to see't. But what's the drift?

Eur. If there should chance to be a sea-engagement,
Let them hold bottles full of vinegar
To pour down into th' eyes of th' enemy.—
But, to be serious;²—I will tell you.

Bac. Speak.

Eur. If we confide in those whom now we trust not,
Mistrusting those in whom we now confide.

Bac. What's that? I comprehend thee not. Pray use
A language that's less pompous and more clear.

¹ *If some one tie Cinesias for wings
Unto Cleocritus.*

This is the Cinesias before mentioned as being very thin and famous for dancing the Pyrrhic dance, and who is here on account of his lightness and activity proposed to be tied by way of wings to Cleocritus, a bulky man of an infamous character.

² *But, to be serious.* The ridiculous scheme Euripides had been suggesting was probably a banter on the very absurd plans that had been proposed for the public benefit. Dropping this, he now enters into general politics, and marks his disapprobation of the ministers and their measures.

Eur. If we our confidence withdraw from those
 We now intrust, and in their stead employ
 Others whose services we now reject,
 'Tis probable we may escape destruction :
 If ruin waits the present system, sure
 Contrary measures cannot but preserve us.

Bac. Bravo, my Palamedes !¹ Thou prime genius !
 Was't all thy own, or was't Cephisopho's ?

Eur. This was my own ; he hit o'th' vinegar bottles.

Bac. Well, what say'st thou ?

Æsch. Inform me in the first place,
 What sort of ministers your state employs :—
 Say, are they good ones ?

Bac. No.—We cannot bear
 Good ministers.

Æsch. Prefers your city bad ones ?

Bac. Why not by choice, but from necessity.

Æsch. Who shall be able to preserve a state
 With frieze and fine-cloth equally disgusted ?

Bac. I pray thee think, if it may yet be sav'd.

¹ *Bravo, my Palamedes.* Palamedes was a man of a great and inventive genius. But Aristophanes makes Bacchus call Euripides here by his name, not merely ironically, in ridicule of his politics, but because he wrote a tragedy on the death of Palamedes.

Frischlin, in his account of this comedy, says, Euripides wrote his Palamedes after the death of Socrates, and in that tragedy frequently alluded to the death of his friend. This, he says, had such an effect as to raise much enmity against Aristophanes : to counteract which and to retaliate on Euri-

Æsch. Were I now with them, something I might counsel; ¹

Not here.—

Bac. From hence ev'n give them thy good counsel.

Æsch. When they th' enemy's country shall invade ²
And leave their own for th' enemy to ravage;
When they shall think their ships their best resources,
Their present revenues destructive. ³

Bac. True;
And these are wholly swallow'd by the judge. ⁴

pides, he adds, the comic poet wrote his *Frogs*.—This is a palpable anachronism. Socrates not only survived Euripides, but was not put to death till five years after the representation of this comedy.

¹ *Were I now with them, &c.* *Æschylus* seems to decline giving his opinion in the shades, that he might induce *Bacchus* to give him the preference and carry him back with him.

² *When they th' enemy's country shall invade.* Such was the advice of *Pericles* at the first breaking out of the *Peloponnesian* war, who recommended it to the *Athenians* to rely on their shipping, with which they might make frequent descents upon their enemy's coasts; and not to trouble themselves about the defence of their own country, a small part of which only lay open to the depredations of the enemy.

³ *Their present revenues destructive.* This seems to be a reflection on the mismanagement of the public revenues. In the last scene of this act we also find a satirical stroke at certain *πολίται*, persons who suggested plans for the improvement of the revenues.

⁴ *And these are wholly swallow'd by the judge.* The judges

Pluto. Give your award.

Bac. I thus decide between you ;

I shall make choice of him that suits my fancy.

Eur. Think how thou'st sworn by th' Gods ¹ to take me
with thee.

Choose then thy best and most devoted friend.

Bac. " My tongue has sworn " ²—but I choose
Æschylus.

Eur. What hast thou done, abandon'd wretch ?

Bac. What I ?

Only declar'd for Æschylus. Why not ?

were chosen by lot out of the citizens at large, the very meanest of them being admitted to hear and determine causes ; for which, as has been already mentioned, they received a fee. The lower rank of citizens seem to have considered this as a material part of their subsistence ; to secure the continuance of which they took the greatest pains to keep the courts constantly employed, by fomenting litigations, and raising false accusations against persons of merit and reputation. The continual payment of these fees, small as they were, seems, from what is said by the scholiast, to have been a considerable expense to the state.

¹ *Think how thou'st sworn by the Gods.* Euripides may here be understood as having tampered with Bacchus to decide in his favor. This seems to be intended to convey an intimation, that he had really been accustomed so to do with the judges appointed to decide upon the compositions of the dramatic poets.

² " *My tongue has sworn.*" Another allusion to the obnoxious line in the *Hippolytus* of Euripides.

Eur. Dar'st look at him thou'st us'd so shamefully?

Bac. How shamefully, if th' audience approve it? ¹

Eur. Thou wretch! wilt leave me here amongst the dead?

Bac. Who knows but life is death,² to breathe a feast,
To sleep naught else but a warm coverlet?

Pluto. Come, Bacchus, both walk in with me.

Bac. Why so?

Pluto. That I may entertain you hospitably,
E'er you depart from hence.

Bac. With all my heart,
'Tis what I've not the least objection to.

Chor. How blest the man whose genius rare
To learning's loftiest heights hath soar'd,
Whose mind adorn'd with studious care
Instruction can to all afford!
The poet thus, his merits tried,
His powers acknowledg'd and approv'd,
Returns his country's boast and pride
Honor'd by all, by all belov'd.
Scorn we mean-time the wretch who'd try
Our taste and judgment to beguile,
With Socrates' loquacity³
Enervating our tragic style;

¹ *How shamefully, if th' audience approve it?* A line of Euripides in his *Æolus* with the alteration of *τοῖς θεωμένοις* instead of *τοῖσι χρωμένοις*.

² *Who knows but life is death?* A passage of Euripides touched on before; here somewhat parodied.

³ *With Socrates' loquacity.* Euripides lived upon a footing

For sure to blend with sounding lays
 The flimsy and unmeaning rhyme,
 The lowest ignorance betrays
 And idlest waste of pains and time.

SCENE V.

PLUTO, ÆSCHYLUS, CHORUS.

Pluto. Go then, my Æschylus, and joy attend thee,
 With useful counsels benefit our city;
 Instruct the ignorant, for they abound;
 This in my name present to Cleophon,¹
 These to those financiers Nichomachus
 And Murmex; this to Archenomus; say
 I charge them here to speed, and that directly,
 For, if they don't, by Phœbus, I will brand them,
 Tie them by th' heels and cast them in the pit
 With Adimantus² son of Leucolophus.

of the greatest intimacy with Socrates. Aristophanes supposes that he learned from him the *Λαλία* or familiar style of conversation which he had introduced into his tragedies.

¹ *This in my name present to Cleophon.* In the first act Hercules recommends "the stool and halter" to Bacchus, as one of the quickest modes of conveyance to the shades. The present Pluto here sends to Cleophon, and to the other persons joined with him in this stroke of satire, we may also understand to be a halter.

² *Adimantus.* This seems to have been the person appointed with Thrasybulus to be joined to Alcibiades in the

Æsch. I shall obey. Do thou to Sophocles
 Consign my seat to keep possession of it,
 In case I should again return ; for he
 Doubtless comes nearest me in tragic powers.
 But pray be careful that this fellow here,
 This low buffoon and idle chatterer,
 May ne'er possess it, ev'n against his will.

Pluto. Attend the poet with your sacred torches ;
 Conduct him with all possible respect,
 Before him singing his own tuneful strains.*

Chor. Ye powers, who in this nether world bear sway,
 Speed the returning bard to realms of day.
 By him instructed let the city know
 What benefits from prudent counsels flow,
 And, while from war and toils of arms they cease,
 Be theirs once more the tranquil sweets of peace.
 May Cleophon and all like him, who love
 Sedition's flaming brand on high to move,
 With ceaseless broils disturb our state no more,
 But raise contention on their native shore.

command of the fleet on his return to Athens, after his first withdrawing himself.

* *His own tuneful strains.* The greater part of this concluding chorus is taken from different tragedies of *Æschylus*.

The Birds

OF

ARISTOPHANES,

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL GREEK,

WITH NOTES.



BY

A MEMBER OF ONE OF THE UNIVERSITIES.



Haud facîle emergunt, quorum virtutibus obstat
Res angusta domi.

JUVENAL.

Preface.

A Translation of ARISTOPHANES has long been wanting to complete the list of versions of the Greek Dramatic Poets made in the English language. That a work of this sort should have been so long a desideratum with the literary world, must be attributed to the very great difficulty that must necessarily have attended the execution of it. Without a deep study of the ancient scholia, a particular acquaintance with the manners and customs of the Athenians, and a thorough comprehension of the notes and commentaries that have been written upon this author, nothing at all could be done. The acquirement of a knowledge of this sort must needs be the result of considerable exertion and industry; and even at best that knowledge must, from the very nature of the subject, be imperfect. The channels, through which the requisite information might have been afforded us, are in a great measure choaked up. The eleven plays of Aristophanes

are all that we have complete of the Attic comedy. Hence, it follows, that Aristophanes must be illustrated by Aristophanes, and that too almost exclusively.

This circumstance alone is sufficient to account for the backwardness, which our translators have shown with respect to this author. Some again have objected to the occasional looseness of expression, which is interspersed throughout his performances. This practice was as much calculated to please an Athenian audience, as it is to disgust us. But even here we are apt to carry our delicacy to too great a pitch of refinement, to imagine indecency where there is no such thing, and to construe what is only ludicrous, into what is in the highest degree indelicate. This mistaken notion too may have tended to exclude Aristophanes from English translation. But it is clear from the very excellent manner in which the late Mr. Cumberland has executed the *Clouds*, that this difficulty may be easily surmounted. We are fully of opinion that *eight* at least out of the *eleven* Comedies will easily admit of an English version. The whole *eleven* have been translated more than once into the language of France.

With respect to those, who think that a metrical version would be better adapted to the purpose, we are bound in duty to give our reasons for differing from them in opinion. A sort of *comico-prosaic* style; if we may be allowed the expression, is the style which suits best the language of English farce. The style of Aristophanes approaches nearest to this. A translation therefore upon this principle will combine two advantages. The force

of every passage, and the keenness of every joke, will be the more effectually preserved; while the fullness of every expression will be the more naturally represented, each line being free from the necessity of consisting of a certain number of syllables. It will come at once within the reach of the English reader, and will assist the scholar in acquiring a knowledge of the original Greek.

As these are our two principal objects, the notes will be found to be explanatory rather than critical, and to consist chiefly of extracts from the ancient scholia, and from the annotations of learned editors. In the present play we feel ourselves much indebted to the excellent commentary of Professor Beck, which, though mixed with occasional error, is notwithstanding of great intrinsic value. The text of Brunck has been uniformly followed.

If the plan, upon which the *BIRDS* has been executed, shall be found acceptable to the public, we shall speedily commit to the press a second volume, containing a version of the *Wasps*, the *Acharnians*, the *Peace*, and the *Knights*.

September 5, 1812.

Dramatis Personae.

EVELPIDES.

PISTHETÆRUS.

TROCHILUS, *servant of* EPOPS.

EPOPS.

CHORUS *of Birds.*

PHÆNICOPTERUS.

Heralds.

Priest.

Poet.

Soothsayer.

METO.

Surveyor.

Legislator.

Messengers.

IRIS.

Patricide.

CINESIAS.

Sycophant.

PROMETHEUS.

NEPTUNE.

TRIBALLUS.

HERCULES.

Servant of PISTHETÆRUS.

THE BIRDS.

ACT I.

EVELPIDES and PISTHETÆRUS, attended by their guides, a Crow and a Daw, are discovered going in search of a habitation among the Birds.

EVELPIS, PISTHETÆRUS, TROCHILUS, EPOPS,
CHORUS, PHÆNICOPTERUS, HERALD.

Evelp. MUST we then go onward, where yonder tree appears?

Pisth. Pox take thee and thy bird; mine on the other hand commands us to go back.

Evelp. To what purpose can it be, companion in misery, that we wander here to and fro? 'Tis as much as our own life is worth, thus to tread the same ground over and over again.

*Pisth.*¹ To think, that at the mercy of this vile crow, I should have thus traversed more than a hundred miles of solid earth!

¹ Here we may supply the ellipse by understanding οὐκ ἐγγίθεις, with Beck, Brunck, Bos, and the Scholiast. The construction is similar to the following passage from Virgil; *Mene incepto desistere victam?* Æn. i. 41.

Evelp. Aye, and that I should have thus suffered myself to be led by the nose by a daw, till scarce a sole remains upon these sandals!

Pisth. Hang me, if I have the least idea where on earth we are.

Evelp. Do you think it likely that you can find a spot to live in here?

Pisth. In faith, not I: that vagabond¹ Excecestides would find it a hard matter.

Evelp. Wretch that I am!

Pisth. Well, never mind, keep trudging on the same road.

Evelp. Curse on that rascal Philocrates,² the bird-monger, who, from pure spite, has sent us on this wild-goose chase: he told us that these fowls, the very cream and flower of his stock, would lead us straight to Tereus,³ the man-puet, who but the other day took to plumage. To cut the matter short, he sold us this crow, which, from its shape and fashion, we judge to be of the same breed with the dwarf Asopodorus, for five good farthings or thereabouts, and the daw for three times the sum. But

¹ Excecestides is represented as a vagrant and a barbarian; so afterwards; δοῦλος ἐστὶ καὶ Κὰρ ὥσπερ Ἑξηκεστιδῆς. Vagrants, says the Scholiast, are best acquainted with the roads.

² Ὁ πινοκωπώλης, a vender of birds, Poll. vii. 197. We refer our readers to Hesychius's exposition of this word; πινακοπώλης· ὀρνιθοπώλης· τίλλοντες γὰρ αὐτὰ καὶ τιθέντες ἐπὶ πίνακος ἐπώλουν τὰ λεπτὰ ὀρμαθίζοντες.

³ Ovid. Metamorph. vi. 671.

they, poor souls, have no more brains than what may serve to put their chaps in motion. See how this fowl of mine yawns and stares about him. Art thou determined (*to the fowl*) to precipitate us down the rocks? For here, it seems, there's not a semblance of a road.

Pisth. A road? there's not the shadow of a track.

Evelp. What says the crow about the course we are to steer?

Pisth. Not a word: but caws and croaks at ease, in changeless uniformity.

Evelp. What says he about the road we are to go?

Pisth. Snapping his beak in defiance, he intimates, forsooth! that I may go on biting my nails in disappointment.

Evelp. Is it not a hard case that we, from downright want, should go in search of the country of the crows,¹ to feed them, and what not—and when equipped for our journey, should thus miserably lose our way? We, in truth, who by birth are ranked as citizens, are troubled with an evil diametrically opposite to that under which Acestor² labors: for he, being a bastard to the state, strives to force himself into legitimacy; while we, of

¹ We should have expected the poet to have used the words, εἰς ὄρνιθας, simply; he however has substituted for the common, εἰς κόρακας, for the sake of the joke. Εἰς κόρακας ἐλθέτω is equivalent to *abeat in malam rem*, *abeat in crucem*, or *occupet illum scabies*.

² Acestor, we are told by the Scholiast, was a tragic writer. Σάκας, was a common expression at Athens for a *stranger* or a *barbarian*.

genuine blood and standard character, not from compulsion, but of our own accord, have quitted, with winged speed and all the feet we could muster, the noble city,—not mal-contented, or dissatisfied with government or state; nor grudging it its greatness and prosperity.¹ E'en let it flourish, and receive within its walls all such—as pay their debts.² Far other are our views. The grasshopper for one month, or two at farthest, is content to chirp amidst the herbage. But the Athenians know no reason; all their life is spent in harping on the same string the tune of plaintiffs, defendants, evidences, and such trash. It is on this account that with wandering steps we bend our course this way, carrying with us a basket, a pot, and some sprigs of myrtle, in quest of a peaceful habitation, where we may live our time out undisturbed with the din of actions and of lawsuits. Our business is now to find Tereus the puet, from whom we are desirous to learn if he has discovered any city like Athens, in the region whither he has flown.

Pisth. Hoa!

¹ For *κεῦδαίμονα* Beck formerly edited *κρύδαίμονα*. This error he afterwards retracted, agreeing with Markland, who asserts that the diphthong *αι* in cases like these cannot be elided.

² *ἐναποτίσαι*. Literally; *To discharge their debts in*. For an instance of a word similarly compounded, Bergler refers to Euripid. Hippol. 1095. *ἐγκαθηβᾶν*. Aristotle too in his Hist. Anim. viii. 27. has *ἐντίκτειν*. See Wesseling on Diod. Sicul. ii. p. 166. So Eurip. Phœniss. 739. *ἐνδυστυχῆσαι*. Line 123. of this play, *ἐγκατακλιθῆναι*.

Evelp. What's the matter?

Pisth. My crow for some few seconds has been giving us warning to look up.

Evelp. Aye, and my daw too yawns and looks upwards, as if intimating something. Surely this must be the place we are in search of. However, we shall soon satisfy ourselves as to that matter, if we shall but make a noise. I say—hark! I'll tell thee what to do: knock at the rock with thy leg.

Pisth. Good! and do thou thump at it with thy pate—that the noise may be twofold,¹ and consequently louder.

Evelp. And hammer at it with a stone into the bargain.

Pisth. Marry, well said.

Evelp. Boy, boy, (*calls within.*)

Pisth. Hark ye, when you call a puet, do you cry “boy, boy?” Instead of “boy, boy,” you ought to call out “puet, puet.”

Evelp. Hoa! puet! there's no end of knocking—I say, puet!

Trochilus. Who's here? who calls my master?

Evelp. Apollo speed me well, what jaws!

Trochil. Bird-catchers these, and to our cost I fear.

*Evelp.*² Hoa! why afraid? let's have softer terms than these.

¹ Bentley has the credit of having restored the metre here by the insertion of the article, before Brunck and Invernizius.

² οὗτος, τί δεινόν; οὐδὲ κάλλιον λέγειν; So Brunck. The old reading was οὕτω 'στὶ δεινόν, οὐδὲ κάλλιον λέγειν, and the sentence was thus connected with the preceding speech of Evelpides. Bentley's emendation is exceedingly ingenious,

Trochil. Go hang.

Evelp. You mistake us for men.

Trochil. What else are ye?

Evelp. I am that Libyan bird, ycleped Hypodedios, by nature timorous.

Trochil. I doubt it.

Evelp. We'll give proof: faith, here's a sample; probe it well, to see what stuff 'tis made of.

Trochil. Tell me, I pray thee, what bird is this.

Pisth. Epicechodos am I, of the pheasant breed, that smell like other poultry.

Evelp. Come, tell us, friend, (for one good turn deserves another) what sort of fowl art thou?

Trochil. A servant bird am I, passive and all submission.

Evelp. Then thou hast in days of yore been drubbed by some game-cock.

Trochil. Marry, not I: when my master turned puet, he happened to express a wish that I would be his bird-servant; and so I, from pure good-nature, knowing well that he was not fond of too much work, turned bird to go his errands.

and perhaps gives us the words which came from the pen of Aristophanes:

οὗτος, τί δέτι νῦν τοῦδε, κάλλιον λέγειν.

Hæus tu, melius est ut dicas, quid nos eum velimus.

“Hark you! you had better tell him our business.”

If we adopt Bentley's emendation, the words must be put into the mouth of Pisthetærus.

Evelp. I never knew before that birds had folks to wait upon them.

Trochil. Though changed my master's nature, yet his palate remains the same to a hair: I remember well, while he yet crawled on earth, he had a sort of liking for pickled anchovies. This taste continues: calls he for anchovies? straightway I lie me to the fishmonger's. For pease-porridge and the necessary appendages? with speed I fetch a ladle and a porridge-pot.

Evelp. Well might they call you *Trochilus*;¹ the sound was wedded to the sense. I tell thee what, good *Trochilus*; haste thee, run; go call thy master.

Trochil. Ill timed, by Jove: he's just taking an afternoon's nap, and is roosting it away, after having been well stuffed with myrtle-berries and gnats.

Evelp. What of that? we can soon awake him.

Trochil. If we do, 'twill make him churlish; however, if you particularly wish it, I'll rouse him.

Pisth. (*To himself.*) I wish you were at the devil: I'm terribly afraid.

Evelp. Egad! I'm in a cold sweat: the daw is quite in a panic and has slipped through my fingers.

Pisth. What a timorous animal you must be, thus to let go your daw.

Evelp. Look at yourself: where's your crow?

Pisth. It's here, to be sure.

Evelp. Where?

¹ Τρόχιλος may be understood to mean a goer of errands.

Pisth. It's—it's gone away.

Evelp. You're as bad as myself: what a pluck you must have!

Epops. Open the gate,¹ that I may make my exit.

Evelp. By Hercules, what beast is this? what's the meaning of all this plumage? and of the triple crest branching from his head?

Epops. Who want me here?

Evelp. May the gods, who—it seems, have been trouncing thee to some purpose,—

Epops. Laugh ye at me, because you see me feathered? I too was once a human creature.

Evelp. It was not you that we were laughing at.

Epops. What then?

Evelp. There's something about your beak so—what shall we call it?—that we would fain smile.

Epops. 'Tis in garb like this that I am stuck up to do penance in Sophocles's Tereus.²

Evelp. What? are you Tereus? are you then a chicken or a peacock?

Epops. A hopeful chick am I.

Evelp. If so, where are your wings?

Epops. I'm moulting.

Evelp. What's that? some distemper?

Epops. No. In winter we birds shed our feathers;

¹ For ὄλγν Bentley conjectures πύλγν: ὄλγν appears to be the more natural reading.

² In Sophocles's Tereus, says the Scholiast, he was represented on the stage as metamorphosed into a puet.

and then new ones sprout out. But tell me, who are ye?

Evelp. We? jolly mortals, to be sure.

Epops. From what country?

Evelp. Where the far-famed line of battle ships are.

Epops. You're Eliastæ¹ then, I presume, staunch limbs of the law.

Evelp. In faith, not we: there's naught goes against our conscience more than law and quibbling. Henceforth we are known by the title of Apeliastæ.

Epops. I thought that spawn like this had been somewhat scanty.

Evelp. Right: however, you will find some here and there in the country.

Epops. And in quest of what came ye hither?

Evelp. Wishing to have a little chat with you.

Epops. On what subject?

Evelp. You were once a man, of shape like us; you once owed money, as we do now; and escaped being arrested, as we have now; afterwards, having become a bird, you were endued with the faculty of flying over land and sea, and can now think at once in the respective capacities of bird and man—so far, so good: matters therefore being such, we are come hither with all due submission and deference, to ask you if you can direct us to any city to repose in, soft, easy, and fleecy like a blanket.

¹ *Eliastæ* lawyers. *Apeliastæ*, men averse to lawsuits, *μισόδικοι*, according to Suidas.

Epops. Seek you a city greater in repute than the one you have just left?

Evelp. A greater one we cannot wish for; but we want one which better suits our temper and disposition.

Epops. Oh! oh! what it's an aristocracy that you want, is it?

Evelp. In truth, not I: no one hates more cordially the author of its name.

Epops. What city, think you, would please you best?

Evelp. Where matters may run on in some such strain as this:—Inprimis, let some honest friend, paying me a morning visit, thus address me; “My friend, I heartily wish that you and your’s would come betimes and bathe with me; I have a marriage in hand; do not, I pray you, forget to come; if, however, you should not be disposed to honor me with a visit this morning, why, all that I can say is, that I shall always be happy to see you, while I have a good board to serve up.”

Epops. Ah! you show great lack of taste. (*Ironically*) What is your opinion?

Pisth. This suits my palate too.

Epops. What?

Pisth. When the father of some pretty wench shall reprove me for my treatment of her in terms like these; “You acted nobly, Stilbonides, and consistently with your character as my father’s friend, in being proof to all mischievous temptation, though you knew you might have jostled with my daughter at random in the dark.”

Epops. Marry, your taste is like the other’s: The long and short of the matter, however, is this; There is a city answering to a tittle in description to the one you are

in search of; it is situated upon the Erythræan gulph.¹

Evelp. Let it be any where but on the sea-coast; there our eyes, when scarce awake, will be saluted with a morning view of the transport ship, with the bailiff on board. Is there no Græcian city you can recommend to us?

Epops. Why dont ye go and live at Lepreum in Elis?

Evelp. The place I never saw; however, I am sure I should abominate it, it so resembles the name of Melanthus's² disease.

Epops. Let me recommend another city, Opus in Locris.

Evelp. I would not be blear-eyed like Opuntius³ for a talent of gold. But come, tell me what sort of life you birds lead; for you must of course be well acquainted with the subject?

Epops. 'Tis a pleasant one enough: In the first place, we use no purse.

¹ Ἐρυθρὰ θάλασσα has been differently taken: some geographers have understood by it the Indian ocean, others the Persian gulph, others the Red sea, commonly so called. See Wesseling on Herod. p. 256. 10. Wesseling on Diod. Sicul. i. p. 23. and Reland's Dissert. on the Red sea.

² Melanthus was a leper.

³ The wit here consists in a play upon the words; as afterwards upon πύλος and πύλις.

Evelp. An excellent plan! by doing so you have removed a great drag¹ upon human happiness.

Epops. We feed in gardens on white oil-grain, myrtle-berries, poppies, and water-mint.

Evelp. If so, you lead a sort of continual honey-moon.

Pisth. Ah me! I see how the feathery race might derive great power and resource, would they but listen to my suggestions.

Epops. And what are they?

Pisth. What are they? Inprimis, when you fly about, don't yawn so mightily, gazing at vacancy; you ought to be above this: for instance, if curiosity should lead any of us in the nether world to inquire about any of you, "What bird is this?" Why—Teleas would philosophise and say; *Man is an unsettled being, a flying bird, a wavering animal, never abiding in the same place.*

Epops. By Bacchus, your censure is just. How shall we manage to remedy the misfortune?

Pisth. Build for yourselves a city.

Epops. And what kind of a city do you suppose that we birds can build?

Pisth. Are you in earnest?² You talk foolishly: look beneath you.

¹ *κίβδηλία* properly means the *adulteration of coin*, thence *deceit* in any shape. We call the attention of our readers to a learned note on the *Hippolytus* of Euripides (616.) by Professor Monk.

² "*Ἀληθές, can that be?*" The word, says Beck, is equivalent to *ἄνωγς* used ironically. The younger class of students are requested to mark the accentuation of the word, and

Epops. I am looking.

Pisth. Look now upwards.

Epops. I do.

Pisth. Turn your neck about.

Epops. I must mind what I am doing ; I should gain, by Jove, special little, if I should put my neck out of joint.

Pisth. Did you see any thing?

Epops. Aye, clouds and sky. ~

Pisth. If so, this must be the *pole* of the birds.

Epops. The *pole*? how so?

Pisth. The *place*, as one might say. It has a rotatory motion, and passes over every *place*; and hence the name. But if you will build upon this ground, and fence it round with a wall, from being called the *pole* of the birds, it shall be called the *city*. In this way you will find no more difficulty in mastering the inhabitants of earth, than if they were locusts; and, what is still greater, you will starve out the gods as effectually as the Athenians did the Melians. ¹

Epops. How so?

for their use we give the following quotation from Thomas Magister: ἀληθές, τὸ ἐναντίον τῷ ψεύδει· ἄληθες δὲ παρὰ ποιηταῖς, τὸ κατ' εἰρωνείαν ἀντὶ τοῦ ὄντως λαμβανόμενον, ὡς τὸ παρ' Ἀριστοφάνει ἐν Πλούτῳ. [123.] See Phavor. Ammon. on the words and Valckenäer's note p. 10. n. 49.

¹ The *fames Melia* of the Greeks was similar to the *fames Saguntina* of the Latins.

Pisth. The gods, we all know, are separated from the earth by the air : consequently, (as we, if we wish to go to Delphi, solicit a passport through Bœotia,) when mortals sacrifice to the gods, unless the gods pay toll, you will have it in your power to check the steam arising from the victims, in its passage through Chaos and this city, which it will have no right to enter without your leave.

Epops. Hey! O! I swear by earth and all her nets, gins, and toils, I never in my life heard a happier thought expressed. 'Tis so good, that I have no scruple whatever to found a city with your assistance, provided the rest of the birds have no objection.

Pisth. Who then is the most proper person to mention the matter to them?

Epops. Yourself, by all means. In making them understand you, you will find little or no difficulty, as since I came among them, I have contributed much to their refinement, and among other things have gifted them with the art of speaking.

Pisth. But how will you be able to assemble them in congress?

Epops. That's easily done. I'll just step into the shrubbery, and rouse my sweet nightingale, and then we'll summon their immediate attendance. And they, as soon as ever they shall have heard our voice, will press forward through thick and thin.

Pisth. Do you then, my dear bird, delay no longer : but, I beg of you, go into the shrubbery with all speed, and rouse from her slumbers the nightingale, your consort.

Epops. Come forth, my bride, and awake from your sleep; pour out ¹ the measures of hallowed song, which through your divine mouth you are wont to utter, when with the liquid language of your shrill voice, you lament the melancholy end of our offspring Itys. Issue forth thro' the leafy yew, ² O harmonious sound! to the throne of Jove; where golden-haired Phœbus, hearing thee, strikes in unison his ivory-bound lyre to thy plaint, and leads the choir of the gods; where at the same time from immortal lips proceeds the concordant, divine melody of the gods.

(*Some one sings within*)

Pisth. O! Jupiter, the voice of the bird! how it has filled the whole shrubbery with sweetness!

Evelp. I say—

Pisth. Well, what do you say?

Evelp. Hold your tongue.

Pisth. Why so?

Evelp. The puet is going to sing again.

Epops. Epopœ, popopo, popœ, popœ. ³ Hoa! hoa!

¹ Suidas has λῦσον, viz. ᾄσον, says Dr. Bentley.

² Σμίλακος is the reading with Brunck. Aldus and the Scholiast have Μίλακος, which form is preferred by Bentley. Euripides too in the Bacchæ (703.) has Μίλακος, and so it is cited by Eustathius.

³ Alous, says Bentley, reads ποποπό, ποποί. Suidas has ἐποποί, ποί, ποποί, ποποί, ποποί. From these specimens of various lection, the Doctor proposes to read,

come, come, come, come, let every one of my brother birds come hither; ye that frequent the well-sown furrows of the corn-fields, innumerable tribes of barley-eaters, flocks of seed-gatherers swift of wing, uttering harmonious sounds: and ye that often in the ploughed land chirp sweetly around the clod, exulting in the powers^x of your voice:—tio, tio, tio, tio, tio, tio, tio, tio;—and ye that in the gardens perch upon the boughs of ivy; and ye birds of the mountains, that feed upon strawberries and wild olives; hark, hither on light wing to my call;—triotio, triotio, triotio, tobrix.—And ye that in the marshy glens devour the sharp-mouthed water-gnat; and all ye that love the dewy places of the earth, and the delightful plain of Marathon; and the bird with speckled wings, the wood-cock, the wood-cock: and ye tribes of birds that flutter around the waves of the sea in company with the kingsfishers;—come hither, to learn what ye never knew before: for here we are in council assembled, every bird¹ in his kind. Here is an old man of good parts, sprouting

ἐποποῖ, ποποῖ, ποποῖ, ποποῖ, ποποῖ, ποποῖ.

“ut senarius sit itidem ut sequens.”

^x οἰωνῶν τῶν ταναοδείρων. So Brunck and the other editions. The first syllable of the word ταναοδείρων, says Bentley, is short: beyond a doubt: he proposes therefore δουλιχοδείρων. What if we read, by a change less difficult, οἰώνων τῶν τανυδείρων? Hesychius has τανύπεπλος, τανύπρωρος, τανύπτερος, and other words similarly formed.

out new opinions, and the adviser of new actions. Come therefore to the debate, every one of you. Come, come, come, come.

Chorus. Torotorotorotorotorotinx. Ciccabau,¹ ciccabau. Torotorotorolililinx.

Pisth. Do you see any bird?

Evelp. By Apollo, not I: and yet I am gazing about me with all the eyes I have.

Pisth. To no purpose then, it seems, has the puet dropped into the shrubbery, imitating the lark.

Phæn. Torotinx, torotinx.

Pisth. My good man, but what can this bird be that is coming.

Evelp. A bird, by Jove, beyond a doubt: what can it be? is it not a peacock?

Pisth. Ha! here comes the puet; he'll inform us: pray what bird is this?

Epops. This is not a bird of vulgar mould, such as you see every day. He is a bird of the fens.

Pisth. Indeed! how beautifully arrayed in purple!

Epops. With good reason: it is from that very circumstance that his name is Phœnicopterus.²

Evelp. Hoa! you there.

Pisth. What do you want? X

Evelp. Here is another bird.

¹ *Ciccabau*, says the Scholiast, is the sound uttered by the owls.

² Phœnicopterus: viz. *Purplewing*.

Pisth. 'Faith! so there is. He¹ seems too to be of foreign extraction: what out of the way bird of song is this? is he a mountain bird?²

Epops. His name is *Medus*.

Pisth. *Medus*? by *Hercules*. And how, in the name of wonder, could he fly hither without a camel?

Evelp. Tell me again what bird is this which has got the crest.

Pisth. But what can this mean? I thought that you only were a puet and were privileged to wear a crest. Does this bird wear one too?

Epops. This is the offspring of *Philocles*, the descendant of *Epops*: and I am his grandsire; as if you were to say; *Hipponicus the son of Callias*, and *Callias the descendant of Hipponicus*.

Pisth. So this bird is *Callias*: what a ragged state his feathers are in.

¹ For the common reading δὴ τάχ' οὗτος, Bentley reads ὅητα χοῦτος: and so after him Brunck from two MSS.

² τίς ποτ' ἔσθ' ὁ μουσόμαντις ἄτοπος ὄρνις ὀρειβάτης; So Brunck. Editions have τίς ποθ' ὁ μουσόμαντις ἄτοπος ὄρνις ὀρειβάτης; MSS. somewhat better; τίς ποτ' ἔσθ' ὁ μουσόμαντις ἄτοπος ὄρνις ὀρειβάτης; The Ravenna MS. has the same reading as Brunck adopts. "Post ποτ' insere ἔσθ', (says Dr. Bentley) et lege ὀροβάτης, ut ὀροτύπος, ὀροφοιτών, apud Hesychium: ὄρνις ultimam producit." Professor Porson (*Hecub.* 208.) is of opinion that the form ὀρειβάτης is contrary to the analogy of the language, and therefore reads, τίς ποτ' ἔσθ' ὁ μουσόμαντις ἄτοπος; ἄρ' ὀρειβάτης.

Evelp. No wonder at that; being a bird of family, he makes fine picking for the sycophants; aye, and besides this, the females have a pluck at him now and then.

Pisth. By Neptune, tell me what spotted bird is this.

Epops. His name is Catophagas.¹

Pisth. But there is no one intitled to this name but Cleonymus, is there? And if so, how is it that he has not lost his crest? But come, tell me, why these birds are equipped with crests? are they going to run the *diaulus*?

Evelp. No: you mistake the matter; they dwell upon the tops of mountains,² my good fellow, as the Carians do, for the sake of being out of the reach of danger.

Pisth. By Jove, did ever you see such a set of birds?

Evelp. A perfect cloud of them, by Apollo; 'tis so great, I can't see the place they come in at.

Pisth. Here is a partridge; and there, by Jove, a woodcock: on one side is a widgeon, on another a kingsfisher.

Evelp. And what bird is this behind the last-mentioned bird?

Pisth. What bird is it? Cirylys, to be sure.³

¹ Viz. *Glutton*.

² ἐπὶ λόφων Bentley and Brunck. ἐπὶ λόρον is the reading of Aldus. We give Bentley's note: "Λόρος hic collis significat, non crista: et jocus est ex amphiboliâ. Ergo ἡ 'πὶ τὸν διαυλον ἦλθον; est an collem ceperunt, ut diaulon melius spectarent? Non; sed, ut Cares, in collibus degunt."

³ *Sporgilus* was a barber: *Cirylys* is the name given to the male halcyon.

Evelp. What? can this name be applied to a bird?

Pisth. Why not? is it not applied to Sporgilus?—Aye, and here comes an owl.

Evelp. What do you say? who was ever known to bring an owl to Athens?¹

Pisth. Here's a magpie, a turtle-dove, a lark, a barn-owl, a thyme-bird, a pigeon, a hawk, an Egyptian vulture, a ring-dove, a cuckow, a red-shank, a goldfinch, a purple water-hen, a screech-owl, a didapper, a chatterer, an osprey, a wood-pecker.

Evelp. Heavens! what birds! what ousels! how they chirp and run about in clamorous mood. Surely they must be brewing mischief against us! ah! see how they stare with open jaws at you and me!

Pisth. Faith! so they do.

310 *Chor.* Popopopopopopopœ. Where is he that summoned me hither? whereabouts is he?

Epops. Here have I been waiting some time, and am always at hand, when my friends want me.

Chor. Titititimpru. What good news to communicate to me?

Epops. News, which concerns us all in common; which is wholesome, reasonable, pleasant, and advantageous. For here are two subtil reasoners come to—

Chor. Where? what to do? what do you say?

Epops. I repeat, that from the nether world are come

¹ A proverbial expression. We should say, "Who ever carried coals to Newcastle?"

hither two venerable old men; and they are come too about some very important business.¹

Chor. I never knew a more fatal blunder since I was born: what do you say?

Epops. Dont fear what I am telling you.

Chor. You have done it now.

Epops. They are very desirous to live amongst us.

Chor. And have you really done this deed?

Epops. Surely; and I rejoice at having done it.

Chor. And where are these two fellows?

Epops. Here, to be sure, as sure as I am here.

Chor. Alas! alas! we are impiously and traitorously used: for he, that was our friend, and dwelt in the same atmosphere with us, has transgressed our ancient statutes,² has violated the oaths by which we are a society; has called us hither to practise his deceit upon us, and has exposed us to that accursed race of mortals, which, ever since it existed, has been our sworn enemy. With regard³

¹ *πρέμνον πρᾶγματος πελωρίου.* Pindar (Pyth. vi. 3. 5.) has the expression *ἔργον πελώριον*.

² The laws of Draco were properly called *θεσμοί*. The term afterwards became general.

³ *πρὸς μὲν οὖν τὸν ὄρνιν ἡμῶν ἐστὶν ὕστερος λόγος.* So the editions and the Ravenna MS. Brunck thus alters by transposing; *ἔστι πρὸς μὲν οὖν τὸν ὄρνιν ἡμῶν ὕστερος λόγος.* But the collocation of *μὲν οὖν* is harsh. Now for the true reading:—"Quum *ὄρνις* semper secundam producat apud Aristophanem, legendum ope Suidæ: ἀλλὰ πρὸς τοῦτον μὲν ἡμῶν ἐστὶν ὕστερος λόγος." Porson, ad Hecub. 208.

to the bird, however, we will manage afterwards. But I move that these two villains be punished without delay, and that we execute them immediately.

Pisth. Egad! that's bad news for us.

Evelp. You have brought all this misery upon us: why did you persuade me to leave Athens?

Pisth. That you might go along with me.

Evelp. To bring mischief upon me, you mean.

Pisth. Pshaw! you talk nonsense.¹

Evelp. How so?

Pisth. You would have some reason to complain, if you were to get both your eyes knocked out.

Chor. Hoa! hey! haste, rush to the bloody attack of the foe, oppose your wings on every side, and invest them. They must both suffer this instant, and be given up for dissection. There is neither mountain, nor cloud, nor sea, that shall afford a refuge to them. But come, let us rend them asunder without delay. Where is the chieftain? let him lead on the right wing.

Evelp. This is what I expected: whither shall I flee to escape from them?

Pisth. Hoa! stop.

¹ *Pisth.* τοῦτο μὲν ληρεῖς ἔχων Κάριτα. *Evelp.* Πῶς; *Pisth.* κλαύσει γὰρ, ἣν ἅπαξ γε τῷ 'φθαλμῷ 'κκοπήσῃς. Bentley puts all this into the mouth of Pisthetærus, contrary to the authority of all the editions and MSS. τοῦτο μὲν ληρεῖς ἔχων Κάριτα πῶς κλαύσει γὰρ, ἣν ἅπαξ γε τῷ 'φθαλμῷ 'κκοπήσῃς; And it must be confessed, that this is much after the manner of Aristophanes.

Evelp. What? to be torn in pieces, I suppose.

377 - *Pisth.* There's no escaping them, take my word for it, by running away.

Evelp. So I fear.

Pisth. I do assure you we must remain here, and fight, and take up our pots to defend ourselves with.

Evelp. And what benefit shall we derive from them?

Pisth. We shall at all events keep off the owls.

Evelp. But how shall we repel the birds of prey?

Pisth. Take this spit, and hold it before you in a posture of defence.

Evelp. And how shall we protect our eyes?

Pisth. Take a saucer or a dish and put it before them.

Evelp. You're a clever fellow; this is a soldier-like contrivance of your's: you surpass Nicias himself in military skill.

Chor. Huzza! onward, play upon them with your beaks. No time to delay. Tear, rend, strike, beat, dash at the dish first.

Epops. Tell me, this instant, ye most savage of all creatures, why are ye going to kill and to lacerate these two honest men, who have done you no harm, my wife's relations,¹ and late neighbours?

Chor. Why should we spare them any sooner than wolves? if they are not our enemies, who are?

Epops. But if they are your enemies in shape only,

¹ The reading of Brunck and the Ravenna MS. is ξυγγενές: though both Brunck and Bentley are of opinion that ξυγγενῆ is the right reading.

and in mind¹ your friends, and are come hither to show you something which may be beneficial to your interests,—

Chor. And how, I should wish to know, can it be, that they should show us any thing to our advantage, when they have been enemies to our forefathers?

Epops. You're mistaken; men of sense often learn much from their enemies.² Prudence is the best safeguard. This principle cannot be learnt from a friend: but an enemy extorts it immediately.³ It is from their foes and not their friends, that cities learn the lesson of building high walls and ships of war. And this lesson saves their children, their homes, and their properties.

Chor. It appears then that it will be better for us to hear what they have to say first; for one may learn something at times even from one's enemies.

Pisth. They begin to soften: draw back a little.

Epops. And very right they should: you've got to thank me for that.

¹ τὸν δὲ νοῦν. For δὲ Bentley reads γε.

² Ἀλλ' ἀπ' ἐχθρῶν δῆτα πολλὰ μανθάνουσιν οἱ σοφοί. So Ovid Metam. iv. 428. *Fas est et ab hoste doceri.*

³ οὐ μάθοις ἂν τοῦθ'· ὁ δ' ἐχθρὸς αὐτὸς ἐξηνάγκασεν. So Brunck after Kuster, except that Kuster by an error of the press has τοῦτ'. Reiske's conjecture οὐ μάθοις ἂν πού τι, is unhappy enough, like the greater part of his conjectures in Aristophanes; he however reads αὐτό σ' for αὐτὸς, which Bentley too reads. All editions before Kuster have οὐδὲν for τοῦθ'; but τοῦθ' is given by Suidas. For αὐτὸς we are favored by Invernizius from the Rav. MS. with the very specious reading of εὐθύς.

Chor. However this is the first instance of our ever opposing you.¹

Pisth. They grow more and more peaceable: lay down the pot and the two dishes. We must however walk within reach of the camp, as it were, with our hands on this spear, spit, I mean; and stay by the side of this pot, so as just to keep it within view; ² for all possibility of retreating is cut off.

Evelp. True: but if we should fall, where shall we be buried?

Pisth. We're sure of a grave in the Ceramicus: for in order to insure a public funeral, we have nothing to say to the officers, but that we died fighting the foe at Orneæ.³

Chor. Ho! every one to his quarters: rest,⁴ and lay your spleen aside with your resentment, as soldiers lay down their arms; let us ask them who they are, and from whence they are come, and what is their pleasure. Epops! I say, I want to speak with you.

¹ ἤναντιώμεθα. So Brunck. "En! quinto loco spon-
dæum. Editiones principes habent ἐναντιώμεθα. Lege ἐνην-
τιώμεθα." Porson. [See *Classical Journal*, Vol. v. p. 142.] So
also Bentley.

² περιπατεῖν ἔχοντας ἡμᾶς τῶν ὀπλῶν ἐντὸς, παρὰ τὴν χύτραν
ἄκραν αὐτὴν ὀρεῶντας ἐγγύς. So the larger Basil edition. Some
MSS. with Brunck read π. ἢ. ἡ. τ. ὁ. εἰ. παρ' αὐτὴν χύτραν
ἄκραν αὐτὴν ὀρεῶντας.

Bentley retains the former reading, except that he punctuates after ἄκραν, and for αὐτὴν reads ἀντην, having in his eye the Homeric expression ἀντην εἰσιδέειν.

³ The joke consists in a *lusus verborum*.

⁴ So Homer: ἀσπίσι κεκλιμένοι, παρὰ τ' ἔγχεα.

Epops. What want you with *Epops*?

Chor. Who are these fellows, and whence come they?

Epops. They are two friends of mine, sojourners from Greece.

Chor. And what could possibly induce them to pay us a visit?

Epops. They want to eat and drink with you, and have a sort of longing for your company, inasmuch as they wish to live with you henceforth.

415 *Chor.* What's this you say? and what have they got to tell us?

Epops. Such things as you'd scarcely believe; such as you never heard of.

Chor. And what object can either of them have, which should induce them to stay here, and to think that by associating with us they should be able to conquer their enemies, or to have it in their power to benefit their friends.

Epops. He prescribes to us the way to get rich: a way so dextrous, that words can scarcely¹ give you an idea of it; a way perfectly incredible: he demonstrates as clearly as possible that we have it in our power to command both heaven, earth, and the spot we stand upon.

Chor. He must be mad.

Epops. Mad? he has arrived at a *ne plus ultra* of sound sense.

Chor. Is he really in his senses?

Epops. He's as sly as a fox; he's contrivance, adroitness, subtilty itself: he's so cunning that he'd slip through your fingers like wild-fire.

¹ *εὐτε* occurs here in the sense of *vix*—*& ne vix quidem*.

Chor. Do, pray, let him speak : after hearing this account of him, I'm quite on the twitter.¹

Epops. Come, my good fellows, both of you hang up your arms with good luck upon the cranes in the chimney ; and you, Pisthetærus, tell them what we have been talking about.

Pisth. Not a word, by Apollo, unless they will enter into the same agreement with me that that baboon Panætius the pastrycook did with his wife : ² viz. that they shall have no dealings with me fair or foul, nor I with them,—of any—

Chor. Description—surely, not.

Pisth. In other words, that I shall be safe from top to toe.

Chor. The agreement's fixed.

Pisth. Aye, but will you swear to it ?

Chor. I'll swear to it, on condition that I have the good-will of the spectators and audience.

Pisth. Agreed.

Chor. If I dont stick true to it, may I be hissed universally.

Herald. O yez !³ this is to give notice, that the soldiers

¹ ἀναπτέρωμαι. Bergler refers to line 1438. of this play ; πάντες τοῖς λόγοις ἀναπτεροῦνται. We refer our readers to Æschyl. Choeeph. 227. ἀναπτερώθης, κάδοκεῖς ὄρεῖν ἐμέ.

² He had married a wife, with whom he was continually at variance, so that finally they agreed by mutual consent to have no dealings with one another. *Suidas* in διαθήμεν διάθωνται and in γυνή μεγάλη.

³ See Bentley's Dissert. on the epistles of Phalaris, p. 202.

do immediately take up their arms and proceed homeward, in order to take note of the orders which are prescribed in our books.

Chor. Man is a deceitful animal; but, however, we'll give you a hearing. Perchance you may tell us something useful, which is calculated for our good; or may prescribe some powerful resource, which our obscured understanding could not discover; while you see it with half an eye. Come, out with it. It is an affair which concerns us all alike. Speak out boldly what measure it is that you prevailed upon yourself to come hither to advise.¹ In this way will the treaty we have struck stand firm, otherwise we are not answerable for the consequences.

Pisth. That's what I am driving at, by Jove, and I have for some time been mincing up an harangue, which I imagine is now ready for the oven. Boy, fetch me a garland; and some water to wash my hands with.

Evelp. What, are we going to dine, or what?

and p. 544. of the addenda (edit. 1.) "Solennis præconum formula. v. Acharn. 999. ss." *Beck.*

¹ 'Αλλ' ἐφ' ὅτῳ περ πράγματι τὴν σὴν ἤκεις γνώμην ἀναπείσας.

So Brunck after Dawes.

'Αλλ' ἐφ' ὅτῳ περ ἤκεις τὴν σὴν πράγματι γνώμην ἀναπείσας.

Invernizius. "Simplicius et rotundius legas; ἀλλ' ἐφ' ὅτῳ περ πράγματι ἂν ἤκεις τὴν σὴν γνώμην ἀναπείσας vel, πράγματι γ' ἤκεις, vel ἀλλ' ἐφ' ὅτῳ περ τὴν ἡμετέραν ἤκεις γνώμην ἀναπείσας vel ἀναπείσων." *Bentley.*

Pisth. Not to dine, you may be sure : I am puzzling my brains to find out some powerful and swinging argument, which will knock all their assurance on the head at once. (*To Evelpides.*) I am so excessively grieved at your fate, who being kings of yore,—

Chor. We kings? over what?

Pisth. Yes, you kings; over every thing that exists, over me and my friend here, aye, and over Jove himself. And what wonder, when you were born before Saturn and the Titans, and before earth herself?

Chor. Before the earth?

Pisth. Before the earth, by Apollo.

Chor. I never heard this before, by Jove.

Pisth. How illiterate you are and unfendy; you have never read Æsop,¹ who writes that the lark is the oldest of things, older than the earth; that afterwards her father died of a disease; that there was no earth at that time; that he, (the father) lay dead nearly five days; that the daughter, not knowing where to find him a grave, buried him in her own head.

Evelp. We may say then that he lies at Cephalæ.²

Epops. If then they existed before the earth, and before the gods, by right of seniority the empire of the universe is their's.

Evelp. Beyond a doubt: I would advise you, however, to enlarge your beak, for Jove wont surrender³ his sceptre without scruples to a bird so destructive to his oaks.

¹ Viz. *The Fables of Æsop*. See Nub. 1375.

² A play upon the word.

³ ὡς οὐ ταχέως ἀποδώσει Ζεὺς. So Brunck reads without

Pisth. That the gods originally did not rule over men, but the birds, is evident from many reasons. For instance I will exemplify the cock, how he ruled the Persians before any of their kings, Darius, Megabyzus, and a whole string of them. It is on this account that at the present day he is known by the appellation of the Persian bird.

Evelp. On this account even now, like the great king, he stalks about with a towering tiara upon his head, being the only bird that wears one.

Pisth. He is therefore now as great a bird as he was then, and has as much influence; for instance, when he crows in the morning, every one springs up to his work, copper-smiths, potters, curriers, cobblers, millers, shield and harp-makers;¹ and others again, when he crows at midnight, put on their sandals in the dark, and go a high-way robbing.

Evelp. Aye, I'll give an account of that: it was through this self-same bird that I lost a cloak of good soft Phry-

assigning any authority for this new reading. Οὐκ ἀποδώσει ταχέως ὁ Ζεὺς is the reading of Aldus, Gelenius, Portus, Kuster, Faber, Beck, and all the editions I have seen. Invernizius gives us the common reading and passes it off for his own, adding this foolish note; "Ita Rav. liber. Vulgo: ὡς οὐ ταχέως ἀποδώσει Ζεὺς τὸ σκ."

¹ *τορνευτασπιδολυροπηγοί.* So all the editions except Invernizius. So Brunck himself. Bentley reads *τορνευτολυρασπιδοπηγοί* from Suidas; and after him Professor Porson. (Suppl. Præfat. Hecub. p. lix.)

gian wool the other day ; for being invited out to a christening, I got a bottle too much, and must needs fall asleep ; well, before the rest had done drinking, the cock crew ; I e'en thought it must be morning, so I tramped it towards Alimus : I scarcely had got me without the walls, when a thief fetched me a rap upon the shoulders ; I fell down, and was just going to cry *stop thief*, when he filched away my cloak.

Pisth. The hawk too, was once king over the Greeks.

Epops. Over the Greeks ?

501.

Pisth. Surely ; and it was in his reign that we were ordered to adore hawks.

Evelp. 'Tis true, by Bacchus ; I fell down on my face before a hawk the other day ; and then rising up in oscillant mood, I swallowed a penny piece, which I had between my teeth, and then went home with an empty purse.

Pisth. And the cuckoo was once king of all Ægypt and Phœnicia ; for whenever he cried *cuckoo*, then the Phœnicians helter-skelter would set to reaping their corn.¹

Evelp. The old proverb is true then ; *cuckoo, bang up to the field.*²

¹ τότε γ' οἱ Φοῖνικες ἅπαντες τοὺς πυροὺς ἄν—ἐθέριζον. Τότ' is the reading of Aldus, and of all the editions before Brunck and Invernizius, who give τότε γ' for τότ'. Such also is the conjecture of Bentley, who is in general too partial to the particle γε. What if we read τότ' ἄν ? MS. B. with Brunck reads τότ' αῖ, which is often interchanged with ἄν in the MSS. For instances of ἄν so repeated, we refer to Med. 252. 616. 369. Hecub. 736. Phœmiss. 1031, 2. Soph. Trachin. 21, 2. See also Porson on Orest. 51. 1109.

² See Erasm. Adag. p. 687.

Pisth. They had so much power, it seems, that if any one, as Agamemnon or Menelaus, should be made king, some one of them must needs be perched upon the sceptre, partaking of the gifts which royalty is intitled to.

Evelp. Ah ! I was not up to this : and in truth I had often wondered why, when Priam was introduced on the stage, he was always attended by a bird : the bird, it seems, was to watch Lysicrates for fear he should receive bribes.

Pisth. And what is more surprising than any thing, this very Jove himself, who now rules the universe, carries an eagle upon his head,¹ king though he be ; and his daughter again an owl ; and Apollo, who waits upon his godship, a hawk.

Evelp. By Ceres, 'tis true : but tell us why these things are so.

Pisth. Why, in order that when men sacrifice, and place the entrails of the victims in the hands of the gods, as is usual, they (the birds) may have the first picking of them, even before Jove himself. Men of that day never used to swear by the gods, but by the birds, every one of them : and Lampon at this day, when he wants to bilk any one, swears "*by this goose !*" Thus it appears that you were once great, and very gods ; but now mere vassals, passive beings, slaves. Men chace you about, in the very temples, as if you were mad : nay more ; every

¹ αἰετὸν ὄρνιν ἔστυγεν ἔχων ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς. So also the Ravenna MS. The common reading was αἰετὸν ἔστυγ' ὄρνιν ἔχων. For ἔχων Bentley conjectures ἐπέχων, than which, according to one of the principles of emendation, nothing can be more likely. For κεφαλῆς he also reads χειρὸς.

petty birdcatcher sets, for the purpose of entrapping you, nooses, gins, lime-twigs, snares, toils, nets, traps: then when you are caught, they sell you by the dozen, and you are exposed to the rough hands of your purchasers. If they are disposed to roast you, matters don't end here; they throw upon you scrapings of cheese, oil, nutmeg, vinegar; and, mixing up all sorts of sweet sauce, they smother you in it boiling hot, as if your flesh was carrion,¹ and the smell thereof must needs be got under.

Chor. Mortal, this is really a sad account; I am quite shocked at the bad management of our sires, who have suffered these distinctions bequeathed to us by our ancestors to dwindle away into non-existence. Sure 'tis by the express order of some deity, and by peculiarly good fortune,² that you have come hither as our guardian angel. Henceforth do I commit to your fostering care my pullets,

¹ *κενεβρίων*. We refer our readers to Brunck's note. We also give an excellent note by Dr. Bentley on the passage οὐκ ἔσται κενέβρειον κ. τ. λ. quoted by the Scholiast from Aristophanes; "Locus ex Aristophane. Erotianus; κενέβρεια· τὰ νεκρῶν κρέα οὕτω καλοῦνται· ὡς καὶ Ἀριστοφάνης. Οὐκ ἔσθ' ὁ κενέβρειον ὅταν θύῃ τι, καλεῖ με. Lege Οὐκ ἔσθω κενέβρειον ὅταν, &c. *Non edo, &c.* Emendandus et castigandus Suidas in Νεβρείην et Νέβρος, hæc Babrii citans; πεινώσα κερδὼ καρδίην δὲ νεβρείην Λάπτει πεσοῦσαν, ἀρπάσσα λαθραίως. Lege sine dubio καρδίην κενεβρείην. Quid sibi vult illud δέ? Kusterus non vidit."

² σὺ δ' ἐμοὶ κατὰ δαίμονα καὶ συντυχίαν. So Invernizius with the common editions. Brunck, for the sake of the metre, has edited κατὰ δαίμονα καὶ κατὰ—Bentley reads κ. δ. κ. τίνα; and a little before for παραδόντων, παραδόντες.

and myself. But come, what measures shall we take? show us quickly; life would not be worth the living, unless we made it a point to recover our former consequence.

Pisth. Well; the first step I advise, is to build one spacious city; to inclose the whole air and the void with large burnt bricks, as Babylon is inclosed.

Epops. O! Cebriones¹ and Porphyryon, what an immense city it would be!

Pisth. Then when this is built, e'en demand back the empire of the universe of Jove. If, however, he shall refuse, or hesitate, or not feel conscious of his inability to dispute the point, declare in due form a sacred war against him; and issue out an order, { that whenever the gods are lewdly inclined, and should wish to effect a passage through your domain, as for instance, when they went a-fornicating after Alcmena, Alope, Semele, and such wenches, — that they shall not. If they shall persist in forcing a passage, you must contrive to muzzle their fury in such a way as to prevent a repetition of such mischief. } In the next place, I should recommend your sending another bird-messenger to the inhabitants of earth, to order them, now that the birds have recovered their former authority, to sacrifice in future to them; and to make the gods a second consideration. The next thing will be, to portion out to the worship of each god a bird to correspond with him in each capacity. Do mortals sacrifice to Venus? let them offer wheat to the coot. Do they offer a sheep to Nep-

¹ The first syllable of this word is long. See Porson's Suppl. Præf. Hecub. p. lxiii.

tune? Let wheat be offered to the duck at the same time. Do they sacrifice an ox to Hercules? Let them offer honey-cakes to the sea-gull. Do they sacrifice a ram to Jove? The orchilus is as libidinous as Jove himself; and therefore they must sacrifice to him a he-gnat, and afterwards wait upon Jove.

Evelp. A good idea, in faith! to sacrifice a he-gnat. Now let Jove employ all his thundering engines.

Epops. But how shall we manage to pass with men for gods, when we appear more like pigeons, flying and wearing wings?

Pisth. Pshaw! Mercury too flies, god as he is; and wears wings; and so do a great many other gods. For instance, Victory is poised upon wings of gold; and so is Cupid. And Homer has compared Iris to a fearful dove.¹

Epops. But wont Jove hurl his winged shafts at us?

Pisth. If men, however, from downright ignorance, should hold you cheap, and deem those only gods, who dwell in Olympus, then let a cloud of sparrows and other birds of grain eat up all their corn from the fields; and then let Ceres supply them with wheat, if she likes.

Evelp. I should doubt whether she will do that; I should think she would rather remonstrate with them.

Pisth. And let the crows on the other hand, by way of proving their divinity, be sent to pluck out the eyes of the

¹ The Scholiast observes that it is not Iris that Homer has compared to a dove, but that it was to Juno and Minerva that Homer applied that simile. On the strength of this, Bentley proposes "H ϵ αν.

oxen, with which they plough the land, and of their sheep. Then let Apollo, the surgeon, come and heal them. He'll be glad of their custom.

Evelp. Aye, Aye; but not till I have sold a pair of oxen which I have got there.

Pisth. But if they will acknowledge you as their god, as their sheet-anchor, as the very earth they tread upon, as their Saturn, and as their Neptune, why then every thing that is good will befall them.

Epops. Mention one thing.

Pisth. In primis, the locusts will not devour their vine-buds; but a file of owls and owlets will annihilate them in a trice. In secundis, the gnats and flies will not damage their figs, but they will be all swept away by one charge of thrushes.

592 *Epops.* But how shall we supply them with wealth? for this, it seems, they like best.

Pisth. The birds will point out to them, when they consult them, mines of metal,¹ and shall show to their diviners the way to make commerce lucrative, so that not one of their merchants shall ever be lost.

Epops. How so?

Pisth. Some bird shall always tell them when to sail, in terms like these; "Stay at home now; there will be a storm." "Now you may set sail; the voyage will be a lucrative one."

¹ τὰ μέταλλ' αὐτοῖς. So the common editions have it. The Rav. MS. omits the article τὰ. Bentley is of opinion that Aristophanes wrote πρῶτα μὲν αὐτοῖς.

Evelp. If so, I'll buy a skiff, and turn merchant, and stay no longer with you.

Pisth. And they shall show them treasures of silver, which their ancestors hid in the ground : for they know where they are deposited, as you know from the proverb ; " No one knows of my treasure, but the little bird."

Evelp. Well then, I'll sell my skiff, and buy a spade, and dig wells.

Epops. But how shall they give them good health, which the gods only can do ?

Pisth. If they are blessed with prosperity, wont this be health sufficient ? Be sure, that no man who does not enjoy prosperity, is sound either in mind or body.

Epops. And how shall they be able to arrive at a mature old age ? For this depends upon the will of heaven. Must they die in early infancy ?

Pisth. By no means : the birds shall add three hundred years more to their life-time.

Epops. After what example ?

Pisth. After what example ? after their own, to be sure. Know you not that that croaker, the raven, lives for five generations ?

Evelp. Wonderful ! what a many advantages shall we reap under their rule, compared with what we receive from Jove !

Pisth. Surely : in the first place we need build no temples of stone to them ; nor erect portals of gold ; but they will dwell in thickets and shrubberies. To the sacred birds, the olive will be a temple. We shall then have no occasion to go to Delphi and to Ammon to sacrifice. Instead of this, we shall have nothing to do but to offer

them barley and wheat among the strawberries and olives,¹ and to pray to them with extended arms, that they will be pleased to give us a good share of blessings. And this we shall easily obtain, at the expense of a few grains of wheat.

Chor. O! old man, that from being the object of our hatred art become that of our respect, it cannot be that we should do otherwise than conform with your way of thinking. On the strength of these arguments of yours, we have sworn and pledged ourselves, that if it shall turn out, that what you have recommended is just, faithful, and sincere, and if you will join us unanimously in this contest with the gods, that the gods no long time hence shall feel the weight of our sceptre. Whatever is to be effected by strength, that is our concern; but in what way that strength is to be regulated, it is your duty to provide.

Epops. True; and there is no time to lose; we must not delay an instant. We must come to the point at once. Before we begin, however, go into my nest, and use my sticks and straw; and tell me your names.

Pisth. That's soon done. My name is Pisthetærus.

Epops. And his name, what is it?

Pisth. Evelpides, the Thrian.

Epops. Heaven bless you both.

Pisth. We thank you.

Epops. Now, walk in.

Pisth. Let us go: do you take and show us the way.

Epops. Onward.

¹ The common reading is ταῖσι κόμαροις. Bentley, Brunck, and Invernizius, read ταῖσιν. The penult of κόμαρος is short.

Pisth. But, hold; come backward a little.¹ We want to know how to contrive to keep up with you who wear wings, when we have no wings ourselves.

Epops. No fear whatever.

Pisth. Recollect what Æsop says: "that the fox kept up with the eagle to his cost."

Epops. Dont be afraid. There is a certain root, which, when you have tasted, will cause you to have wings.

Pisth. In this way then we shall be able to enter. Come, Xanthias and Manodorus;² take these blankets.

Chor. Hoa! I say, do you hear?

Epops. What do you want?

Chor. Take them along with you and give them a good dinner: but leave under our care the melodious, the musical nightingale: bring her hither, that we may sport together.

Pisth. Attend, I pray you, to their request: call her forth from the reeds. Call her hither, by the gods, that we too may be treated with a sight of the beauteous nightingale.

Epops. If such be your wish, it shall certainly be done. Procne, come forth, come and show yourself to the strangers. (*Enter nightingale.*)

¹ ἀτὰρ, τὸ δεῖνα, δεῦρ' ἐπανάγκρυσσαι πάλιν
φέρ' ἴδω, φράσσον νῦν· πῶς ἔγωγε χ' οὐτοσί.

Such is the reading of Brunck; and such is that of Bentley, except that for ἔγωγε he gives ἐγώ τε. Suidas in ἐπανάγκρυσσαι has δεῦρ'.

² See Plut. 624. They were two servants.

Pisth. O! Jove omnipotent, what a beautiful bird!
how tender! how white!

Evelp. By heavens! I should like to try a fall with her.

Pisth. What embroidery¹ she has about her, like a girl
in her teens.

Evelp. I can scarcely hold from giving her a kiss.

Pisth. You'd be hard put to do that; she's got a
beak like two toasting forks tagged together.

Evelp. Aye, but one ought to take the rubbish from
her head in order to come at the quick, as when you
strip off the white from an egg to be favored with a sight
of the yolk—and so to kiss her.

Epops. Let us go.

Pisth. Success attend us, and you at our head.

Chor. O! dear, O! delicious, O! dearest of all my
feathered acquaintance; sharer of my song, beauteous
nightingale;—art thou come, come? art thou here, with
that sweet, that harmonious voice of thine? Do thou,
that utterest a melodious strain early in the spring, lead
on the anapaestic measure.

Mortals,² that are condemned to live in darkness, mor-
tals, that fade like the leaves, emblems of imbecility,

¹. Our author evidently had the following passage from
Homer in his eye; ὃς καὶ χρυσὸν ἔχων. (Iliad B. 872.) See
Wytttenbach's Epist. Crit. p. 28. s. and Porson's Addenda to
the Hecuba (153.)

² The beginning of this beautiful parabasis, says Kuster, is
quoted by Clemens Alexandr. iv. Strom. p. 492.

Φύλλων γενεᾷ πρόσμοιοι. See Iliad. Z. 146. Simonid.
in Stobæus p. 530. edit. Gesner. "Lectio ἡμετέροισι apud

images of clay, a race lightsome and without substance, creatures of a day without wings, miserable mortals, men that flit away as dreams,—give ear to us who know no decay, to us who live for ever, to us who dwell on high, who flourish in immortal youth,¹ who harbor thoughts which perish not; that having received all accurate information from us on the subject of sublimity, having learnt correctly the nature of birds, the birth of the gods, of rivers, of Erebus, and of Chaos, ye may tell Prodicus² with his philosophy to go hang.

In ancient days Chaos, and Night, and sable Erebus, and boundless Tartarus existed, when there were not such things heard of as earth, air, or sky. At such a time was it that Night laid her first egg,³ an egg purely her own:

Schol. pro ἀμαυρόβιοι metro repugnat, et ex sequenti ἐφ' ἡμέραισι, glossâ scilicet superscriptâ, profluxit. Hæc omnia ex Æschyl. Prom. Vinc. 549. seqq. adumbrata censet Berglerus. Σκιειδέα φῦλ' ἀμενηνὰ, Cf. Aj. Lor. 126. Eurip. in fragm. Meleag. Pind. Pyth. ῥ. 136. Mox variam lectionem τ' ἀλαοί præbet Schol. Sed minimè sic posita toleranda est particula τε. Pro proceusmatico Brunckiano, προσέχετε, πρόσχετε semper Bentleius."

¹ The poet gives to the birds such epithets as Homer applies to the gods. See Hom. Odyss. 5. 218. and Pierson. on Mæris p. 4.

² See Nub. 360.

³ The Scholiast says, ὑπ' ἡνέμια καλεῖται τὰ δίχα συνουσίας καὶ μίξεως. See Plutarch. Sympos. Qu. 2. 3. Wesseling on Diod. Sicul. i. 27. and Bentley's Epistle to Mill, p. 454. s. Lips. edit.

from which in process of time was hatched that urchin Cupid, the god with wings of gold, swift as the torrents of air. He, by a union with dark-winged Night, in the midst of Tartarus, gave birth to our race, and first introduced us to the light. Now before this Cupid had turned all things topsy-turvy, there were no such beings as gods. On a general hurlyburly however, there issued forth into existence, sky, sea, earth, gods, and other *fungi*. Thus you see the gods are junior to us. For the truth of our being the spawn of Cupid,¹ we plead our wings, and our ability to keep pace with the Cupids. Nay, besides this, it is to us that mortals are indebted, when their mistresses are pliant;—love is only won by presents; the taste of wild-fowl, or the notes of a goldfinch, operate strongly upon the ears and palate of a *chère amie*. The long and short of the matter is, that men receive all the blessings they enjoy from us and us only. We point out to them the work of each season. When the crane takes his flight across the Mediterranean, 'tis seed time; 'tis time for the pilot to season his timber; 'tis time to spin cloth for Orestes,² that he may have no occasion to have recourse to the high-way, when he wants a great coat.

Again, the kite tells you when you ought to shear your sheep; the swallow again shows you when you should sell

¹ πολλοῖς δὴλον· πετόμεσθα γὰρ καὶ τοῖσιν εἰ. σ. 'This is the common reading. Bentley reads πετόμεσθά γ' αἰεὶ κ. τ. εἰ. σ. Much better Brunck, with Invernizius, inserts τε between πετόμεσθα and γάρ.

² A noted highway robber. See line 1490 of this play, and Acharn. 1167.

your warm watch-coats, and buy a light dress for the summer. In fact, we are of more use to you than Ammon,¹ Delphi, Dodona, and Apollo. We birds are the hinge of every thing you do; we regulate your merchandise, your eating and drinking, your marriages. Every thing that relates to your prophecies you dignify with the appellation of *bird*: if you hear the slightest noise, you call it a *bird*; if a person sneezes,² it is lucky, it is a *bird*; if an animal crosses the road before him, it is a *bird*, lucky or unlucky; if ominous sounds are heard, they are placed to the same account; if you get a new servant, or if an ass³ falls down and rises again of himself, there must needs be something strange in it,—it is referred to the same source. Matters then being such, are we not worth a thousand Apollos?

If therefore you will proclaim us as gods, we will chirp you oracles by the dozen, we will regulate your climate, your seasons, both winter and summer, and will temper the sultry weather: we will not, in sullen pride, sit sta-

¹ Ἀμμων, all the editions and MSS. Ἄμμων, Bentley.

² See Xenoph. Mem. i. 1. 3. Exped. Cyr. iii. c. 2. § 5. [Sturz. Lexic. Xenophont. iii. p. 756.] Valckenäer on Herodotus, p. 488. Vulp. on Catullus, 45. 9.

³ This superstitious notion is absurdly explained by the Scholiast, and conveys no correct idea of the meaning of the passage; we give his words; λέγεται τι τοιοῦτον· ὡς συμβολικός τις, ἐρωτώμενος περὶ ἀρρώστου, εἶδεν ὄνον ἐκ πτώματος ἀναστάντα, ἀκήκοε δὲ καὶ ἑτέρου λέγοντος· βλέπε, πῶς ὄνος ἂν ἀνέστη; ὁ δὲ ἔφη· ὁ νοστῶν ἀναττήσεται. See Suidas in ὄνον, ὄσιν.

ring about us among the clouds, as Jove does : but present upon the spot we'll give to you, to your children and to your children's children, health, wealth, prosperity, good fare, peace, youth, mirth, dancing, banqueting, with pigeons' milk in abundance ;¹—in fact, you shall have good store in such profusion, that you shall actually be surfeited with sweet-meats.

Semichorus. Muse of the forest,² tio, tio, tio, tio, tio-tinx, with variegated plumage ; along with whom in the woods, and on the mountain-tops, tio, tio, tio, tio, tio-tinx, perched upon the leafy ash, tio, tio, tio, tio, tio-tinx, I utter the sacred strain to Pan with harmonious voice ; and ye dances of Rhea, totototototototototinx ; through whose divine influence, Phrynicius, like the bee, busily culls the flowers³ of immortal verse, teeming constantly in melody,—tio, tio, tio, tio, tiotinx.

Chor. Spectators, if any of you want to lead an easy life in future, come to us. For whatever is on earth repugnant to law and constitution, or disgraceful, all this is of first-rate glory with us. On earth it is a breach of

¹ γάλα τ' ὀρένθων τὸ ἐν τοῖς ὠοῖς λευκόν· says the Scholiast. It is said too of any delicacy. See Suidas and Mnesimach. in Athen. ix. 9. p. 387. κοπιᾶν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀγαθῶν is *to be surfeited with good things, to be killed with kindness*. See Toup's Emend. of Suid. and Hesych. iv. p. 125.

² Μοῦσα λοχμαία. Bentley, on account of the corresponding line in the antistrophe, reads Μοῦσ' ὦ λοχμαία.

³ Lucret. iii. at the beginning ;

*Floriferis ut apes in saltibus omnia libant,
Omnia nos itidem depascimur aurca dicta.*

the public peace to buffet a man in the street ; not so with us ; with us nothing is more common than to fetch a man a cuff upon the cheek, and call out, "Away with your stick, rascal, if you want a bit of fair fighting." If any one of you is branded as a coward, he will rank with us as a bird with speckled plumage ; if any of you is a barbarian, though he be as much so as Spintharus, he shall be called a chaffinch, closely akin to Philemon. If he is a slave from Caria, as Excecestides is, let him come to us for ancestry, and we'll soon make him one of us. If Pisias's son wishes to commence traitor,¹ he shall be a partridge, his father's best chick ; with us 'tis honorable to run away like a partridge.

169 *Semichorus.* With a strain like this, tio, tio, tio, tio, tiotinx, do the swans, flapping their wings, laud Apollo ; tio, tio, tio, tio, tiotinx, sitting upon the banks of the Hebrus, tio, tio, tio, tio, tiotinx. While through the air resounds the harmony ; the many tribes of beasts are astounded ; the sea is calm ; totototototototototinx, all Olympus re-echoes ; the kings of heaven listen with amazement ; the celestial Graces and the Muses raise the corresponding song ; tio, tio, tio, tio, tiotinx.

¹ ἐστιγμαένος. So στιγματίας, Lysistr. 333. Fugitives were stigmatised when caught. Poll. 3. 79. Spintharus, according to the Scholiast, was a barbarian and a Phrygian. Ἐκπερδινκίσαι is the conjecture of Palmerius, with reference to Perdiccas King of Macedon, then at war with Athens. So Μηδίξειν in Demosthenes. The conjecture is exceedingly ingenious, but, we suspect, too far-fetched to be introduced into the text.

Chorus. There is nothing in the universe so desirable as to wear wings. For instance, if any of you spectators had wings, and should grow hungry, owing to the intolerable length of the tragic chorusses, he might take a gentle trip home to dinner, and then, having crammed his maw, might slip in again among us. If again, in the style of Patroclides,¹ he should be so unfortunate as to make himself disagreeable, for fear of the offence being pawned upon him or his cloaths, he might fly it away; and so, after having cleared away all suspicion and caused it to evaporate, might resume his seat again. Again, if any one should feel an itching for another man's wife, and should chance to see her husband in the theatre, he might spring his wings, and hie him slyly to the dame, and what not—then return and claim his place. Would not you give millions for such a faculty? Diitrephes,² you see, merely by wicker-wings, has been raised to the highest offices in the state,³—is become, in fact, something from nothing,—and is, at this moment, a very bird of birds.

¹ Scholiast. et Poll. v. 91. “Ἐξιδίειν propriè est *exsudare*,” says Beck.

² Suidas in Διitreφῆς and Eustath. on Hom. p. 411. Diitrephes had acquired a large fortune by making wicker-baskets.

³ Bergler refers to Equit. 158. and Eccles. 144.

ACT III.

PISTHETÆRUS, EVELPIS, EPOPS, CHORUS, PRIEST,
POET, SOOTHSAYER, METO, SURVEYOR, LE-
GISLATOR.

Pisth. All this is true, sure enough: yet I never saw any thing more laughable.

Evelp. What do you laugh at?

Pisth. At your wings to be sure.¹ You look, for all the world, like a half-painted goose.

Evelp. And you look like a blackbird with his head shaved.

Pisth. The comparisons are just; as Æschylus says, "We do penance in our own wings, so that we have nobody else to blame for it."

Epops. Well, what step shall we take first?

Pisth. *In primis*, we must hit upon some grand, tooth-breaking name for the city: *in secundis*, we must sacrifice to the gods.

Evelp. So I think too.

Epops. What name, think you, shall we give it?

Pisth. Shall we take that grand name which Lacedæmon goes by, and call it Sparta?

Evelp. Sparta? by Hercules! No, never. I'll never have a bed of straw, while I can doze on feathers.²

¹ *ὠκύπτερα* are termed by Beck *pinnæ alarum*.

² The passage is obscure. Brunck says that the wit arises from the twofold meaning of *σπάργαν*.

Pisth. What name then shall we give it?

Evelp. Some sounding name, to be sure; some name which carries in it the high idea of clouds and sublimity.

Pisth. What think you then of NEPHELOCOCYGIA?¹

Epops. Precisely so: you've just hit it. There's sound enough there with a vengeance.

Evelp. Pray, is this that airy castle where Theagines and Æschines have their estates?

Pisth. Aye, surely; and it is a place of much greater authenticity than Phlegra, which lives only in the brains of poets, where they say the gods tumbled the giants topsy-turvy.

Evelp. This will be a dashing sort of a town; but what god shall we dedicate it to? what deity² shall we make our president?

Pisth. What ails Minerva? what have you to say against her?

Evelp. A great deal: what order can there be in a city, where a woman puts on small-cloaths, and a man takes to petticoats?

Pisth. But who shall preside over the Pelasgian wall?

¹ See Lucian. V. Hist. i. p. 657. ed. Amst. [i. 29. T. ii. p. 93. Reiz.] where mention is made of Nephelococcygia.

² We are told by the Scholiast that the Greek expression *ζαίνειν πέπλον* alludes to the custom of carrying the veil of Minerva Polias at her great festival. See Poll. vii. 50. Wes-seling. on Diod. Sicul. ii. p. 440. Eurip. Hecub. 466. Meurs. Panath. c. 17, 18.

Epops. That's soon managed : we've got a bird of Persian breed ; he's a true-bred cock, and will battle with Mars himself.

Evelp. Heaven bless your bird-ship ! I dont know whom you could have fixed upon so well.

Pisth. Do you, for your part, go up into the air, and lend all possible help to the workmen ; carry gravel for them, strip to your shirt-sleeves, and pound cement ; fetch the hod, tumble nimbly up and down the ladder, station watch, keep the fire from being extinguished,¹ go about with your bell, sleep ;—moreover also, dispatch two messengers, one to heaven and the other to earth, and after they have gone their errands, direct them to come to me.

Evelp. With all my heart. Good bye to you ; you'll stay here.

Pisth. Away with you, my friend : you're the man, when one wants a bit of business done. For my part, I'll sacrifice to the new gods, and call hither a priest to lead on the solemn procession. Boy, boy, fetch me a basket and a wash-hand bason.

Chor. Good ! excellent ! I give my most thorough consent to the proclamation of a general supplication to the gods. We will also offer a victim by way of testifying our regard for them. Let the Pythian song resound in

¹ For an account of this custom we refer our readers to Thucyd. iv. last chapter, and to Fabricius on Dion Cassius i. 733.

honor of the god, and let Chæris¹ the ballad-singer join the harmony.

Pisth. Hark ye awhile. By Hercules, what's this? I have seen many wonders in my life-time, yet never saw I heretofore a crow playing upon bag-pipes.

Epops. Priest, begin the sacrifice.

Priest. I will; where is the basket? Here's a prayer to feathered Vesta, and another to the kite our household god, and one to all the birds of the air, be they male or female.

Chor. All hail! O! hawk, protector of Sunium, Pelasgian king.

Priest. And here's one for the Pythian and Delian swan, and one for Laïona,² mighty quail, and for Diana, the goldfinch.

Pisth. We therefore no longer worship Diana under the title of *Colænis*,³ but of *goldfinch*.

Priest. And one for Bacchus the chaffinch, and for the ostrich, the great mother of gods and men.

Chor. O! Cybele, ostrich queen, mother of Cleocritus, grant to the inhabitants of Nephelococcygia health and wealth, to them and to their friends.⁴

¹ A sorry musician of that day, whose name the poet satirically introduces here.

² The poet here alludes to the island of Delos, called also Ortygia, from its being frequented by quails. This was the birth-place of Apollo and Diana.

³ See Suidas in *κολαινίς*.

⁴ *Αὐτοῖσι καὶ Χίοισι*. The Chians sided with the Athenians at

Pisth. Aye, I am always glad to see our friends noticed.

Priest. And to our heroes, and birds, and to the children of our heroes, to the purple water-fowl, to the pelican, to the shoveler, to the incendiary-bird, to the heath-cock, to the pea-cock, to the owl, to the teal, to the elasas,¹ to the heron, to the ganet, to the black-cap, to the tit-mouse.

Pisth. Less of this noise, for heaven's sake. Peace, I pray you, this instant! What a paltry victim this is to which you have invited an immense host of falcons and vultures! Why, a sparrow-hawk would swallow it at a meal. Away with you and your trumpery! I can manage the sacrifice myself better than this.

Priest. Shall I then once more utter the sacred, the hallowed strain over the lustral water, and of the gods invoke one at least, if we have but enough to set before him? For as to the victim in hand, it appears to be literally nothing else but skin and bone.

Pisth. Let us pray and sacrifice to the winged gods.

(*Enter poet.*)

965 *Poet.* Celebrate, O! muse, in thy song the happy city Nephelococcygia.

Pisth. Ha! what can this be? what's the matter? who are you?

Poet. I am he that utters the harmony of sweetly-sounding words, the handy servant of the muses, as Homer would say.

the commencement of the Peloponnesian war. See Thucyd. 4. 51. Diod. Sicul. 12. 27.

¹ A bird to which we have no corresponding English name.

Pisth. How come you then to wear your hair,¹ if you are in service?

Poet. You mistake me. I and all my kind are cyleped poets, handy servants of the muses, as Homer says.

Pisth. With reason is it then that your coat has seen some service. However, tell me, poet, what, in the name of wonder, sent thee hither?

Poet. I have been composing a song on your new city Nephelococcygia; some of the verses are in the Cyclian style,² others such as are sung by chorusses of virgins at feasts, and others again after the fashion of Simonides.

Pisth. Is this then a poem of your own composing? how long have you been in eking it out?

Poet. The praises of Nephelococcygia I have been singing for some time.

Pisth. How can this be? I'm just christening the city.³ I'm in the very act.

Poet. Swift is the voice of the muse; 'tis like the winged speed of the courser. Do thou, O! founder of this city, thou that buildest it as Hiero built cities upon Ætna,⁴ Hiero whose very name smells of divine honors, bestow thine abundant charity on me thy humble servant,

¹ None but freemen were allowed to wear their hair. See the Scholiast.

² The Cyclian or dithyrambic poems were written in different metres, and were sung at the feasts of Bacchus.

³ Children at Athens received their names on the tenth day from their birth. The expression *πρῆσθαι ὄνομα* occurs in the Phœnissæ of Euripides, lines 13 and 645.

⁴ A parody on the style of Pindar.

and shower upon me such blessings as thou art disposed to part with.¹

Pisth. Plague take the fellow, he'll work us, if we dont give him something. Hoa! you priest there, you've got a leather-dick and a waistcoat, give one of them to the poet. Here, you man of rhyme, is a good outside skin for you; your windowed raggedness seems to stand in need of one.

Poet. Nothing loth does the muse receive the gift. In the meantime, however, we'll tip you a fugue of Pindar.

Pisth. Pox take the beast with his Pindar!

Poet. *Amid the wilds of Scythia wanders Straton, with not a shirt to hide his nakedness. As luck would have it, he picked up one day a pair of breeches; but alas! there were no strings to keep them on with. Do you take, bright sir, do you take?*

Pisth. Yes, faith! I take your meaning clearly; you want the fellow's waistcoat too, you greedy dog. Hoa! you blood-letter, doff your waistcoat. Poets will have their own way. Now, my good fellow, (*to the poet*) a good journey to you.

Poet. I'll get me gone, and compose a song about your city. Land, O! Apollo, thou god that art perched on a chair of gold, this quaking, this frozen city: come forth, and bless with thine august presence these snow-pelted, verdant plains. Huzza! Nephelococcygia for ever.

¹ ἐμὴν, τείν. He imitates, ridiculously enough, the Doric dialect, which prevails in a certain degree in all choric verse.

Pisth. In truth you've escaped being frozen to death to some purpose, inasmuch as you've filched away two good items of wearing apparel. 'Tis something of a nuisance, after all, that this vagabond of a poet should have smelt out this city so soon. But do you take up this bason, and sprinkle the lustral water round the city.

Priest. Peace be upon this place.

Sooths. Of all things that you do, mind you do not sacrifice a goat.

Pisth. Who the devil are you?

Sooths. A soothsayer, surely.

Pisth. Go, hang.

Sooths. How can you treat the servants of heaven so contemptuously? The oracle of Bacis manifestly regards this city Nephelococcygia.

Pisth. How came you not to tell me all this, before I had commenced building the city?

Sooths. Fate ordered otherwise.

Pisth. Well; come, let us hear it.

Sooths. Here goes then; *When the wolf and the raven shall take up their abode together between Corinth and Sicyon—*

Pisth. What have I to do with Corinth?

Sooths. You mistake: Bacis meant this merely as an oracular way of mentioning the air:—to proceed;—*First of all, sacrifice to Pandora¹ a white ram; and to him who shall chance to be the first to interpret my response, to him I will that ye give a new coat and a pair of unsoiled shoes.*

¹ To the earth, the mother of all things.

Pisth. Are you sure this is a clause in it? about the shoes, that is to say?

Sooths. Take the book.—*And along with them a glass bottle, and a good stock of roast-beef.*

Pisth. Is the roast-beef too mentioned?

Sooths. Take and read; you'll believe your own eyes. *If therefore you execute my orders, with due correctness and dispatch, an eagle shall you be amid the clouds;—if not, you shall neither be a dove, nor an eagle, nay, not even so much as a wood-pecker.*

Pisth. And is all this in it too?

Sooths. Here's the book: dont take my word for it.

Pisth. This oracle, in truth, savours of other stuff, when compared with one I was favored with the other day, from Apollo's own mouth. Hear it yourself. *Whenever a man shall come to you un-invited, boasting of his soothsaying powers, to the great torment of those who are sacrificing with unfeigned devotion, and shall evince a longing for a slice of this or that joint of the victim;—that man, be assured, is a rascal, take him and give him a hearty drubbing.*

Sooths. You're joking surely.

Pisth. I appeal to my books. *Lay on him; spare him not, if he be Jove's own bird, if he be Lampon himself, or even the almighty Diopithes.*

Sooths. Is that too a clause in the oracle?

Pisth. Take and read. I'd advise thee to pack off—

Sooths. Dear me! what's the matter?

Pisth. Pack off, this instant, yourself and all your trumpery. (*exit Soothsayer.*)

Met. I've something to say to you—

Pisth. Here's another nuisance. What want you here? What's your business, your intention, your mission hither?

Met. I am come to take measure of the air, and to parcel it out into acres.

Pisth. And who, in the name of all the gods, art thou?

Met. Who am I? Meto, to be sure; a character known as well all over Greece, as I am at Colonus.

Pisth. Tell me what's the meaning of all this stuff?

Met. These are rules to measure the air with.¹ The air, you see, may, on the whole, be compared to an oven. Having described then this crooked straight line, as one may say, and fixed one leg of the compasses in one extremity of it—do you take?

Pisth. The devil a bit do I take.

Met. I shall turn them about with this line as a radius, and so trace out a quadrilateral circle. In the centre shall be the forum; and straight streets shall lead to it, as the beams glance off from the sun's orbit.

Pisth. Emblem of Thales's wisdom! Meto, I say—

Met. Well, what do you say?

Pisth. You can't conceive how I like you: take my advice, and you'll begone.

Met. What's the matter? why should I not stay?

¹ The poet ridicules the absurd notions of the mathematicians of that day. The sentence is not intended to have any correct meaning. Aristophanes talks of straight curves, and of quadrilateral circles. Well might Pisthetærus be in the dark. The satire is very pointed and acute.

Pisth. Strangers are refused shelter here, as at Lacedæmon.¹ Already some blows have been exchanged in the city.

Met. What, is there some commotion among you?

Pisth. Forbid it heaven!

Met. How then?

Pisth. A resolution has been passed *nem. con.* that all braggadocios shall be well mauled.

Met. If so, good day to you.

Pisth. Faith! you'll be hard put to it to escape: the whip's already cracking over your head.

Met. Woe is me!

Pisth. Oh! oh! you now measure your steps back again: you'll go a *geometrising* elsewhere. (*exit Meto.*)

Surveyor. Where are the alien-officers?

Pisth. What effeminate puppy is this?

Surv. I am appointed surveyor at Nephelococcygia.

Pisth. Surveyor? and who, the devil, sent thee here?

Surv. Teleas, to be sure.

Pisth. Are you willing then to receive your proper fee, and home it again without any further bustle?

Surv. Aye, surely; and with pleasure. I've got to attend a meeting at the town's hall, where I have some business to finish for Pharnaces.²

¹ Our author glances at a barbarous custom prevalent at Sparta; viz. the refusing admittance to all foreigners. At this time, the Athenians were at war with the Lacedæmonians.

² A Persian satrap, on a visit at Athens. The greatest part of the Persians, during the Peloponnesian war, sided with the Lacedæmonians: the Athenians were therefore studious to

Pisth. Take this then, and be gone : a good drubbing is the fee I have for you.

Surv. What's this for ?

Pisth. This is a sample for Pharnaces.

Surv. I bear witness that you have violated the laws of nations, in having struck a surveyor.

Pisth. Off, off, this instant ! away with your judicial urns ! is it not intolerable that they should let loose upon us their surveyors, before we can get our sacrifice quietly over ?

Legislator. *If any Nephelococcygian shall be found to maltreat or use any way amiss an Athenian citizen—*

Pisth. What's the meaning of this diabolical decree ?

Legisl. I am a law-bookseller, and am come to vend a code of new laws for the use of your city.

Pisth. What is it ?

Legisl. *Be it enacted, that the people of Nephelococcygia do use the same measures, weights, and laws, as the inhabitants of Olophyrus do.*

Pisth. If you do not take care of yourself, you shall come off with monkey's allowance.

Legisl. What ails your temper ? why so churlish ?

Pisth. Away with your laws, this minute : I'll make them tell to your cost to-day, I've a notion.

Surv. I summon Pisthetærus to appear before me in the month of Munichion.

Pisth. Are you sure of it ? Hoa ! what, you're here yet, are you ?

please such of the Persians as came to Athens, in hopes of gaining them over to their party.

Legisl. And if any one shall resist a magistrate, and not pay him that respect which the law ordains—

Pisth. Devil take you! are you here too?

Surv. I'll trounce thee; thou shalt be fined ten thousand drachmæ.

Pisth. And I'll do for thy urns.

Surv. Do you recollect filthifying the public pillar?¹

Pisth. Ho! seize him! stop thief! (*exeunt Surveyor and Legislator.*)

Priest. Now, that we have cleared away this rubbish, we'll proceed to sacrifice a goat.

Semich. To us now who see, who govern all things, mortals shall sacrifice with due devotion. We cast our eyes over all the earth, we protect the fruit, annihilating the myriads of insects, which spring up amid the flowers with destructive maw, and perched upon the trees, devour the herbage. And such as infest the fragrant garden with their noisome presence, we destroy. Reptiles and insects which sting, of whatever kind soever they be, perish beneath the shadow of our wing.

Chor. On this day be it proclaimed; that if any man among you² will kill Diagoras the Melian, he shall be rewarded with a talent; that if any one will kill a disaffected person, even though he has been slain outright already, he shall receive a talent for his services;—we extend this our proclamation still further;—if any one will

¹ On the public pillar were affixed the laws, decrees, resolutions, public notices, &c. See *Acharn.* 513. and *Reiske's Ind. Demosth.*

² To the audience.

bring hither the head of Philocrates the bird-monger, he shall have a talent; if any one will bring him hither alive, he shall have four talents. This man has actually been known to sell seven siskins for five farthings and a half: nay, he has been known to blow up thrushes to make them appear plump, and to expose them publicly for sale; and has actually been seen to thrust the extremities of the wings of black-birds into their nostrils, to make them look tempting. Doves he has been seen to confine in cages, and to teach the shameful lesson of decoying birds of the same feather. Thus much it is our pleasure to proclaim: and if any one of you, spectators, has a single bird in his possession, let him give it its liberty immediately; if you dare to disobey our orders, we will straight-way catch some of you by way of a bait, and compel you to entrap others.

Semich. Happy is the race of birds, which in winter need no additional cloathing; whom the heat, be it ever so intense, annoyeth not: in the leafy bosom of the flowery meadows do we dwell, at such time as the harmonious grass-hopper pours forth his maddening melody under the mid-day beams of the scorching sun. In winter the hollow caverns afford us shelter, while we sport with the mountain nymphs: and on the sacred, vernal, flourishing fruit of the myrtle do we feed, and in the orchards of the graces.

Chor. A word now to the audience:—if you will decide in our favor, we will shed all sorts of blessings around your heads, so that you shall have as much reason to be pleased at your choice, as Paris had when he gave the apple to Venus. Inprimis, you shall have pence by

the dozen from mount Laurium,¹ (and you all like to see the head of an owl upon a brass farthing;)—this species of fowl shall nestle with you, and shall pair in your purses, hatching, in process of time, young coins. In the next place, your houses shall be as temples; the roofs shall be triangular and represent a spread eagle. If any of you shall be comfortably seated upon a sinecure, and have an itching for some delicious morsel or other, we'll send him a hawk to transact all his odds and ends for him. If you want to stuff in a good dinner, we'll furnish you with gizzards to facilitate digestion. If, however, you decide against us, we give you warning to get brass moons² made to shelter your heads with, as the statues have: for if we shall catch any of you without this apparatus, particularly if he has got a new coat on, we'll take care he shall smell foul for six months to come.

¹ At the foot of mount Laurium were the Athenian gold mines. The Athenian coins had a head of Minerva on one side, and on the reverse the name of the goddess with the form of an owl, which was sacred to her.

² These *brass moons* were placed on the heads of the statues of the gods to keep the birds from annoying them.

ACT IV.

PISTHETÆRUS, MESSENGERS, CHORUS, IRIS, HERALD, PATRICIDE, CINESIAS, SYCOPHANT.

Pisth. The sacrifices, my birds, are favorable. But it is an odd thing that no messenger comes from the city, to tell us how they get on there. But hark ye, here comes a runner of the first class.¹

First Mess. Where—where—shall—I—find Pisthetærus the chief magistrate?

Pisth. Here am I.

First Mess. The wall, please your honor, is built up.

Pisth. That's good news.

First Mess. I never knew a more splendid, or a more magnificent set-out in my life: the wall is actually so broad, that if Proxenides the boaster and Theagines were to meet with four in hand, though their horses were as large as the Trojan horse,² they would pass one another with ease.

Pisth. By Hercules, do you say so?

First Mess. In length too, for I took measure of it myself, it is upwards of a hundred acres.

¹ One who smells of the Alpheus; who has a touch of Olympus. So in the *Ranæ* δόξυ πνέων is put for a warrior.

² See Eurip. *Troad.* 14. Virg. *Æn.* ii. 15. Pausan. *Att.* i. 23. Albert, on Hesychius in Δούγιος.

Pisth. By Neptune, what a length! who, in the name of all that's wonderful, built up a mass like this?

First Mess. The birds, to be sure, by themselves too: there was no Ægyptian brick-layer, no stone-mason, not even so much as a carpenter to help them. They did it with their own hands, wonderful as it may appear. From Libya there came cranes to the amount of thirty thousand, well loaded with foundation-stones. These were immediately polished by the rough beak of the dacker-hen. The storks on the other hand were busy in carrying bricks; the sea-gulls again and other aquatic fowls fetched up water into the air.

Pisth. And who carried mortar for them?

First Mess. The herons in hods.

Pisth. And how did they apply the mortar to the stonework?

First Mess. This, my good fellow, was cleverly contrived: the geese made shovels of their feet, and after having minced up the mortar, loaded the hods.

Pisth. Wonderful! what use cannot feet be applied to?

First Mess. The ducks with their aprons tied about their loins carried bricks, and flew about, like boys, with trowels behind their backs. As for mortar, we were supplied by wholesale with that by the swallows, who brought it in their mouths as fast as it could be used.

Pisth. Who would be the fool to employ workmen for money? come, let me see: what next? who worked at the wooden part of the walls?

First Mess. The pelicans made the best carpenters, who with their beaks clipped the gates into form; and

the noise they made exactly resembled that made in the docks. And now the gates are placed upon their hinges, the bolts are fixed, and every thing is safe around the walls: the patrols go round, the watch-bells are rung, guards and garrisons are stationed in the towers. But I must be off and wash myself: do you, in the meantime, mind the rest. (*exit first Messenger.*)

Chor. Hoa! what's the matter? are you quite astounded with this unaccountable news?

Pisth. Yes, by Jove, I am; and well I may: it appears devilishly like a lie. But here is one of the guards coming as a messenger; he seems as if he had tidings of war to bring us.¹

Second Mess. I say, I say, here, hark, I say—

Pisth. What's to do?

Second Mess. A shocking thing has happened: some one of Jove's crew was observed flying through the gates into the air, and escaped the observation of the daws who were on guard.

Pisth. Impertinent creature that he must have been! which of the gods could it be?

Second Mess. Which of them we know not; but one thing we know, viz. that he had wings.

Pisth. Well; I hope you've sent messengers in pursuit of him.

Second Mess. We sent instantly thirty thousand mounted hawks armed with bows and arrows; every bird joins in

¹ πῦρ' ἰχ' γ' βλέπων—*carrying war in his countenance.*
πῦρ' ἰχ' γ', a *war-dance* (or a dance in armor) is here put for *war* itself.

the pursuit, that has got crooked talons; screech-owls, buzzards, vultures, horned-owls, eagles; and while they are hunting after the god, the whole air is troubled with their impetuosity, with the fluttering of their wings, and with their clamor. Nor is the god far off, if I mistake not; egad! here it is.

Pisth. We'd best take to our slings and bows: hither, every attendant: shoot, all: fetch me a sling.

Chor. War arises, war at the name of which I shudder, between us and the gods. Let each of us guard the air, which is beset with clouds, the air, which sprung from Erebus; lest some one of the gods should effect an entry, and sneak in this way. Let us be all eyes:—I hear the divine fluttering of his godlike wings.

Pisth. Ho! you, where are you flying to? stop, this instant; halt; stay; cease your flying. Who are you? whence come you? tell us where you're sent from?

Iris. I come from Olympus, the abode of the gods.

Pisth. What's your name? are you a ship,¹ or a helmet?²

Iris. Iris am I, who sail through the air on light wing.

Pisth. Are you then the Paralus or the Salaminia?

Iris. What's that?

Pisth. Let some buzzard seize her immediately.

Iris. Seize me? what have I done?

Pisth. We'll trounce thee to some purpose.

Iris. You are besides yourself.

¹ A ship, because decked out in flowing robes, which suggested the idea of sails; a helmet, because equipped with plumage.

Pisth. By which gate entered you the city, impertinence?

Iris. Faith! I can't tell that.

Pisth. Did ever you hear such equivocation! were the daws on guard when you came in? answer me, did you get a passport from the storks?

Iris. What does the man mean?

Pisth. Did you come without one?

Iris. You must be mad.

Pisth. Did you then come without receiving the watchword from the bird-chieftain?

Iris. Devil a watchword did I ever receive, silly fellow.

Pisth. And so you sneak up and down *vespertilionising* through other people's premises, and through chaos.

Iris. Where else would you have the gods fly?

Pisth. By Jove, I can't tell: at all events, you've no business here. You are now trespassing, while I am speaking. Call yourself *Iris*, or any name you like, there's not a soul alive deserves being flogged to death more than yourself.

Iris. But I am immortal.

Pisth. Mortal or immortal, that makes no difference; you ought to be flogged to death. In truth, we should be mighty fools, in my humble opinion, if we, who lord it over the universe, should suffer you gods to go on humoring your own lewd notions, and should not teach you the lesson of submitting to your superiors. Tell me, whither you are wing-bound, this instant.

Iris. I am going to the nether world, being sent thither by my father, to order them to sacrifice to the Olympian

gods, to offer up victims of both sorts upon the altars, and to perfume the streets with the smell of fat.

Pisth. What do you say? to what gods?

Iris. To what gods? to us who live in heaven.

Pisth. What are you gods?

Iris. Where are there any other gods?

Pisth. The birds are the gods, which men are to worship: 'tis to them that they must sacrifice, and not to that pretender Jove.

Iris. Foolish, foolish man! dont provoke the anger of the gods; so sure shall Justice not overthrow thy whole species with Jupiter's spade; so sure shall smoke and flame not reduce to ashes thee and thine with Licymnian¹ bolts.

Pisth. Mark well what I am going to say; cease your proud boasting: peace, I say, this instant: is it a Lydian or a Phrygian dastard, think you, that you are hectoring in this insolent manner? If this fellow Jove shall dare to molest me any further, take notice that I will fire him, his throne, and the whole house of Amphion,² by sending a host of torch-bearing eagles in array against him; and purple water-fowls I will arm with leopard-skins against him, heaven and all, to the number of six hundred and upwards;—in faith, one water-fowl³ single-handed would be match enough for him. Lastly, if you go on plaguing

¹ So called from a play of Euripides called *Λικύμνιος*, in which is introduced a character killed by lightning. Hence the proverb *Λικύμνιοι βολαί*.

² Parodied from Æschylus's Niobe.

³ The Greek *πορφυρίων* is the name also of one of the giants, who fought against Jove.

me thus, I'll strip you as stark naked as you were born, and though you be Iris herself, Juno's own washerwoman, I'll play you such a hunts-up, as shall make you be at your life's last shift to account for an old man of fourscore being blessed with so much vigor.

Iris. Go to the devil with your threats.

Pisth. You wont sheer off, wont you? you shall suffer for it in some shape or other;—

Iris. Unless my father shall extricate me from your clutches—

Pisth. Dash it! she's slipped through my fingers:—another time, perhaps, you'll talk of lightnings and thunders to those who are afraid of them.

Chor. Henceforth, therefore, we forbid that Jove and his crew do at any time pass through our city; and moreover we do command and insist that no mortal henceforth and for ever do sacrifice victims, or offer burnt-offerings to those beings formerly known by the appellation of gods.

Pisth. 'Tis terribly strange that the herald, who was sent to the nether world, should not yet have returned. I begin to tremble for his safety.

Herald. O! Pisthetærus, most happy, most wise, most illustrious, most wise, most clever, most happy—O! give me words to express the rest.

Pisth. What have you got to say?

Herald. All nations on earth have sent you this crown of gold as a proof of their high regard for your talents.

Pisth. I accept it. But how comes it that they have thought it worth the while to bestow on me this distinction?

Herald. O! you that have founded a most illustrious city in the air, you can scarcely have any conception of the value which men put upon you; you cannot form any idea how you are respected by the inhabitants of these regions too. For before you built this aforesaid city, men used to be the dupes of Lacedæmonian fashion and etiquette, wore their hair, enured themselves to short commons, changed their shirt once a twelvemonth, Socratized, carried sticks;¹ —but now, all on a sudden, new-fangled as it were, they are grown bird-mad: they in fact ape the birds in every thing they do. Inprimis, they all, first thing in the morning, give over roosting it in bed, and rise up to humor their maw: next, they take an airing in the law, and have fine picking among bills, writs, warrants, and so forth. In fact, they are so completely *birdified*, that a great many of them have taken to themselves the names of different birds; for instance, there is a vintner, who has taken the name of *Partridge*, Menippus is called *Swallow*, blear-eyed Opuntius again is called a *Raven*; Philocles is called *Lark*; Theagines, a *Brent-goose*; Lycurgus, an *Ægyptian stork*; Chærephon, a *Bat*; Syracosius,² a *Magpye*; Midias, a *Quail*; for he strongly resembles a quail, after he has been well drubbed by a game-cock. In fact, all their songs are about the birds; some of them sing about the swallow,

¹ Alluding to the Lacedæmonian *scytale*.

² Professor Porson here reads *Συρακόσιος* instead of *Συρακοῦσιος*, the metre requiring it. Eupolis, quoted by the Scholiast, has the word:

Συρακόσιος δ' ἔοικεν, ἡνίκ' ἂν λέγῃ
Τοῖς κυνιδίοισι τοῖσιν ἐπὶ τῶν τειχέων.

others again about the widgeon, or the goose, or the dove, or wings; or at least a feather is the burthen of their song. So far, so good. One thing more, however, I have to tell you, viz. that in a trice here will be above a myriad of them soliciting wings of you, and talons, and the use of them into the bargain; so that you had best procure betimes a stock of wings for your visitors.

Pisth. If so, there's no time to loiter: but do you run with all speed, and fill all the baskets and voiders you can get with wings, fill them up to the brim. Tell Manes¹ to bring me some immediately; and I, in the mean time, will receive them with all due courtesy.

Chor. This city will, at this rate, be well stocked with men as well as birds.

Pisth. If it shall please Fortune, it will.

Chor. Aye; they'll all grow fond of our city.

Pisth. Make haste and fetch them. (*to the servant.*)

Chor. No wonder; there's every thing here that can induce a man to leave his country: here is Wisdom, Love, the ambrosial Graces, and the placid countenance of soft Ease.

Pisth. What a lazy beast it is! Onward, bestir yourself. (*to the servant.*)

Chor. Fetch, some one, a basket of wings. Rouse the sluggard after this fashion; fetch him a rap, so: (*strikes the servant.*) he's as lazy as a jack-ass.

Pisth. Yes, hang him, he's lazy enough.

Chor. Do you first arrange these wings in their proper places; those that belong to birds of song, here; those

¹ Manes is the name of the servant of Pisthetærus.

that belong to ominous birds, there; and those that are worn by marine fowls, there. So shall you be able to allot to each that sort of wing which he is best cut out for.

Pisth. I swear by all the screech-owls, I wont any longer put up with your conduct; you're so lazy and so slow. (*to the servant.*)

Patricide. May I become a soaring eagle, that I may be able to fly over the azure waves of the barren sea! ¹

Pisth. The messenger, it should seem, is right enough. Here's a fellow singing about eagles.

Patricide. I never, in my days, knew any thing more pleasant than flying. I am quite in love with your way of living. I am literally bird-mad; 'tis my whole desire to fly, to be initiated into your society, and to have the benefit of your laws.

Pisth. What laws? for those amongst us are without number.

Patricide. All of them; and that in particular which legalises the strangling and defaming of a father.

Pisth. With us there is nothing which sets a man off to such advantage, as the circumstance of his having, while yet a pullet, given his father a hearty thrashing.

Patricide. This is the very reason why I am come hither: I want to strangle my father, and then all's my own.

¹ The epithet ἀτρυγέτος is applied by Homer too to the sea, and this Aristophanes must have had in his mind. II. i. 316. παρὰ τὴν ἄλδς ἀτρυγέτοιο. Here the word ἀτρυγέτοιο is rightly explained by the Scholiast by τῆς ἀνάγκης. See the Phœnissæ of Euripides, (line 217.) περιρρύτων ὑπὲρ ἀκαρπίστων πεδίων Σικελίας.

Pisth. But we birds have an old law, which is still preserved on the triangular tables of the storks; that when a stork shall have become a father, and shall have brought up all his storklings till they can fly themselves, the young ones are bound in their turn to maintain their father.

Patricide. Faith! I should gain special little indeed, if, by having come hither, I should be bound to maintain my father in addition to all other things.

Pisth. Not a bit of it: for since you have come this way from pure motives, I will equip you out as a bird that has no father; and the advice, that I shall give you, shall be wholesome enough, even the very same that I received when I was a boy. But at all events dont meddle with your father's life. Take this wing in one hand, and this spur in the other, thinking that you are equipped like a game-cock; mount guard, turn soldier, maintain yourself by fighting other people's battles, but spare your father's life. And since you are such a desperado, and must needs fight, e'en fly it away to Thrace,¹ and fight there.

Patricide. By Bacchus, your advice is good: I'll follow it.

Pisth. If so, you'll prove your good sense. (*exit Patricide.*)

Cinesias. To Olympus am I fluttering on light wing, flying about in the air this way and that, with sweet——

¹ The Athenians were at that time at war with the Thracians and Macedonians, who, according to Thucydides and the Scholiast, were attached to the Lacedæmonian interest.

Pisth. To effect that ¹ would require a whole packet of wings. (*to himself.*)

Cines. With undaunted mind and body, steering a new course.

Pisth. Health to Cinesias the linden-tree : ² what could induce you to steer your bandy legs this way ?

Cines. I want to become an harmonious nightingale.

Pisth. Less of your piping : tell me in plain language what you want ?

Cines. I wish to be fitted out with wings at your shop, that so I may be enabled to soar high above the clouds, and extract from thence strains, which are heard to float along the air upon the darksome aerial wave.

Pisth. How will you extract strains from the clouds ?

Cines. Ah ! that's the secret of our profession ; the most distinguished of us dithyrambic poets are all in turns sublime as ether, obscure as clouds, darksome, rapid in our flights. However, if you'll lend me your attention awhile, I'll put you up to the whole concern.

Pisth. In faith, not I.

Cines. Do, I beg of you : I will let you into a knowledge of the whole air, of the existence of fowls, which soar on high, of birds famed for length of neck.

¹ τούτῃ τὸ πρᾶγμα Beck renders *hic homo* ; we should conceive it rather equivalent to *ut hoc efficiat* ; viz. *to be able to soar so high, would take, &c.*

² Cinesias was so remarkably tall, and at the same time so remarkably weak and slender, that his body was obliged to be supported by thin laths made of the wood of the linden-tree. See the Scholiast.

Pisth. Woop!

Cines. Bounding along over the sea, may I ride upon the blasts of the wind :—

Pisth. Egad! I'll tame your extravagant notions, or I'll try for it. (*beats him.*)

Cines. Sometimes moving forward towards the south, sometimes approaching to the north, cutting my way through the boundless air. In truth, this is an agreeable way of showing your wisdom. (*ironically.*)

Pisth. Is not this the very thing you want, viz. to be able to flutter about?

Cines. But hold; you would not serve a dithyrambic poet so, would you?—a bard whom every street would be glad to have given birth to?

Pisth. Well; will you remain here with us, and instruct a chorus of birds, of the same make and ward with Leotrophides?

Cines. You laugh at me to my face. But be assured I'll never stop, till I shall have perfected myself in the art of flying. (*exit Cinesias.*)

Sycophant. What birds are these,¹ having nothing to do,

¹ An Alcaic verse, which ought to be arranged thus:

ἄρνιθες τίνες οἶδ', οὐδὲν ἔχοντες, πτεροποίκιλοι.

the scansion is the same as the following lines; of the same poet,

μηδὲν ἄλλο φυτεύσῃς πρότερον δένδρεον ἀμπέλῳ.

of Horace,

Nullam, Vare, sacrá vite prius severis arborem.

and of Sappho,

κατθανοῖσα δὲ κεῖτ', οὐδέποκα μναμοσύνα σέθεν.

with particolored plumage? tell me, O! swallow, with extended wing,—

Pisth. Hang it! here's another nuisance of no small magnitude. Here comes another fellow piping it away to my cost.

Sycoph. Tell me, I repeat it, O! swallow, with extended wing,—

Pisth. His own ragged state seems to me to be the burthen of his song. P'faith! it would require many swallows with him to make a summer.¹

Sycoph. Where is he that equips us with wings?

Pisth. Here am I: what want you?

Sycoph. Wings, wings, to be sure. Ask me not twice.

Pisth. What? are you going to take a flight to Pellene?²

Sycoph. Not I: I am a bailiff belonging to one of the islands, and a sycophant,—

Pisth. I envy you your profession.

Sycoph. Aye, and a petty-fogger, into the bargain: but come, give me some wings, I want to take a trip round the world, and summon such to take their trial immediately as deserve hanging.

Pisth. But how will you be able to manage this a bit the better for flying?

¹ The poet alludes to the proverb μία χειρὶδὼν οὐ ποιεῖ ἔαρ, one swallow does not make a summer. See the Scholiast.

² The Pellenian coats (χλαῖναι Πελληνικαί) were in great repute with the Greeks. We refer our readers to Hesychius in the phrase χ. Π. Eustath. on Homer, p. 292. 6. Pindar. Olymp. ix. 146.

Sycoph. Pshaw! my motive for having wings is, that, when I may be annoyed by highway-men, I may retreat in company with the cranes, being well loaded with writs by way of ballast.

Pisth. Is this then really your employment? young as you are, do you make a practice of summoning foreigners to justice?

Sycoph. Why should I not? I was never brought up to any particular occupation.

Pisth. But surely there are many honest employments, which a man of your cloth might pursue, without totally abandoning justice, and turning petty-fogger.

Sycoph. Less of your advice, if you please; and more of your wings.

Pisth. On this, I speak you winged.

Sycoph. And how can mere words make a man winged?

Pisth. It is by words that all men are raised aloft on the wings of fame.

Sycoph. All?

Pisth. Have you never heard the old men in the barbers' shops, commending their sons in terms like these? *Diitrephes's words have had particular force with my son, they have furnished him with sublime notions of equitation; they have acted with him as wings:* Another, if his hopeful has a turn for the stage, exclaims that he soars on high on the wings of tragedy, and that his wits are carried clear away, he is so bent on it.

Sycoph. I never knew before that words were equivalent to wings.

Pisth. You know it now then. The mind is elevated by words, and man rises above himself. So, you see, I

want, on the pinions of good and wholesome advice, to make you emerge from vice to virtue.

Sycoph. Aye ; but I dont want to do any such thing.

Pisth. What then do you intend to do ?

Sycoph. I am determined not to give my ancestry reason to blush. My grandfather was a sycophant, so am I. But, come, equip me with the swift pinions of a hawk, or an owl, that, having summoned the attendance of some of the islanders, and having found a true bill against them, I may return in a trice to the place I set out from.

Pisth. I understand you : you mean, I presume, that the culprits may receive their sentence, before they arrive to take their trial.

Sycoph. Exactly so.

Pisth. In fact, while the culprit is sailing with all speed to arrive in time, you in the meanwhile intend to take a trip to his home, and seize his forfeited goods.¹

Sycoph. Precisely. In short, one ought to be a perfect top.

Pisth. A top, to a nicety. And here, by Jove, is a genuine pair of Corcyrean² wings, which will serve for a lash to make it spin. (*flogs him.*)

¹ The sense is, says Beck ; “ While he, being summoned to attend at a court of justice at Athens, is setting sail to arrive in time, you, in the mean time, by virtue of your wings, may fly back to his home, and seize his forfeited goods, on the ground of his not appearing on the day appointed for his trial.”

² *Corcyrean*, because Corcyra was celebrated at that time for its whip manufactories. The Κεκυραία μάστιξ was in great repute.

Sycoph. Hoa! you hurt: you've got a lash in reality.

Pisth. Here are wings to some purpose; I'll now make you spin with a vengeance.

Sycoph. Oh! hold; it smarts.

Pisth. Off, off; wont you fly when I've given you wings? away with you! the devil's at your heels. I'll punish your outlawish ways. (*exit Sycophant.*) Come (*to the Chorus.*) let us take away these wings.

Chor. In the course of our flight we have witnessed many wonders, and have seen strange phænomena. Among other things, which attracted our attention, was a huge trunk of a fellow, called Cleonymus, with more bulk than spirit, a perfect mass of rubbish, a stupendous lump of inanimate animation. This trunk in spring vegetates, and *sycophantises* in profusion; in winter again, it sheds shields¹ instead of leaves. Besides this, at some distance from hence, we have discovered a place totally dark, amidst a rayless desert; where mortals and demi-gods are wont to eat mutton and crack their jokes together. There they remain till evening: but to stay longer than that is not safe. For if any unfortunate wight should be benighted, and chance to fall in with that magnanimous highway-robber Orestes, so sure was he to feel himself lighter by the weight of his cloaths, and to find all the prominent parts of his features literally mashed to a mummy.

¹ Cleonymus is reproved for his cowardice, "*relictâ non benè parniulâ*," in Horace's words.

PROMETHEUS, PISTHETÆRUS, CHORUS.

Prom. Ah! me, I tremble every inch of me, for fear Jove should clap eyes upon me. Where can Pisthetærus be?

Pisth. Holla! what can this be? What's the meaning of this fellow's face being so disguised?

Prom. Do you see any of the gods in the rear of me?

Pisth. No, by Jove; not I. But who are you?

Prom. Pray, how goes the time?

Pisth. The time? The afternoon is just commencing. But who are you?

Prom. Is it sunset, or later than that?

Pisth. I dont like you; we admit no dominos here.

Prom. What is Jove doing? is he busy collecting or dispelling his clouds?

Pisth. I dont like to talk to people whom I dont know.

Prom. If so, I'll disclose myself; here I am, Prometheus, at your service.

Pisth. Heaven bless you, Prometheus.

Prom. Hush, hush, not so loud.

Pisth. Why so?

Prom. Silence; dont utter my name again; I am dish'd, if Jove finds out I am here. But, hold; I have a great deal to tell you about what has been going on in the upper stories of the sky: in the mean time, take this para-

sol, and hold it over me, to screen me from the vengeance of the gods.

Pisth. Good! excellent! you have contrived this archly enough, and in true character. Haste, hie thee under cover, that so thou mayest speak without fear.

Prom. Attend then.

Pisth. Proceed; I'm all attention.

Prom. It's all over with that fellow Jove, the thunderer.

Pisth. From what time is his ruin to be dated?

Prom. From the time that you walled the air in: since then, the devil a bit of flesh-meat has been offered to the gods by way of sacrifice; since that day they have not so much as come within the smell of roast-beef. They are obliged to fast as at the Thesmophoria;¹ and as for the barbaric gods, they are reduced to such a state of starvation, that, in a twangling, Illyrian sort of style, they gabble vengeance against Jove himself; and swear that, unless he will instantly throw the flesh-markets open, and secure them access to the tag-rag-and-bobtail scraps there, which they have always been accustomed to, they will immediately proceed to the recovery of their ancient rights by force of arms.

Pisth. What, are there any barbaric gods with you then in heaven?

Prom. Surely; those must be barbaric with a vengeance, who are Excecestides' tutelary deities.

¹ The Thesmophoria lasted five days, on one of which was a general fast. See Kuster on Thesmoph. 86.

² See Brunck's note.

Pisth. And by what name do they go?

Prom. By what name? they are called Triballi.

Pisth. Oh!—what, I suppose they are the authors of the expression “Go hang.”¹

Prom. Exactly so: I’ve got another thing to tell you besides; Jove and the Triballi are going to dispatch to you two ambassadors to sue for a treaty: but do you take my advice, and enter upon no treaty, on any other terms than these, viz. that Jove do resign his sceptre to the birds, whose due it is, and give moreover to you Basilea² in marriage, and all the appertenuances to so great a name.

Pisth. And who is this Basilea?

Prom. A damsel of exquisite beauty; the very same who forges Jove’s bolts and in fact every thing else; as good counsel, impartial law, prudent management, docks, liberty to abuse superiors, exchequer, fees for hanging, &c.

Pisth. If so, she does him all his little odds and ends.

Prom. No doubt of it. Get her then, and you’ve got every thing. This is what I was so anxious to tell you: and you know I am partial to mortals; that’s my character.

Pisth. Aye, I know that well enough: ’tis you that gave us fire to cook our victuals with.

Prom. I hate the gods, as you well know.

Pisth. By my faith, I dont think you ever liked them.

Prom. Aye, aye, I’m ’Timon³ to the back-bone: but, come, I must be going; take this parasol, that if Jove

¹ The wit here is obscure. Bergler is of opinion that it consists in the similarity of the two words *triballoi* and *ἐπιτριβεῖς*.

² Viz. *sovereignty*—personified.

³ Timon was an atheist.

should chance to see me, he may think I am a person attending one of Minerva's votaries ¹ at her great feast.

Pisth. And do you take and carry this chair.

Chor. In the region of the Sciapodes² is a fulsome lake, where Socrates exercises the art of witchery; there also 'tis said that Pisander went to see his shade, which he thought had shuffled off its earthly coil while he was yet alive, and hearty; along with him was a huge victim, which he sacrificed, as did Ulysses, with averted eye;—when, lo! uprose Chærephon the bat, as soon as the blood gushed from the wound.

ACT V.

NEPTUNE, TRIBALLUS, HERCULES, PISTHETÆRUS, *Servant of PISTHETÆRUS*, CHORUS.

Nept. Here, you see, is the city Nephelococcygia, whither we are bound. Hoa! you other fellow, why so slovenly with your dress? put your coat in trim; you're as lop-sided as Læspodias. What, the plague, could the gods be doing to deify thee!

Tribal. Pugh! nonsense!

Nept. Go hang: I never saw such an uncouth, barbarian sort of god in my life. I say, Hercules, what must we now do?

Herc. You've heard my opinion, which remains unaltered, viz. that the man, who has had the impertinence to

¹ Meurs. Panath. c. 23. Brunck on the Eccles. 732. Phot. Lex. p. 97. s. Spanh. ad Callim. Cer. 127. p. 824.

² Perhaps the word may be rendered *Hottentots*.

wall out the gods from their due, should be strangled without ceremony.

Nept. But, hark you, you forget we were commissioned to sue for a treaty.

Herc. True; and that's the very reason why he ought to swing immediately.

Pisth. Fetch me the cheese-knife; bring the nutmeg and some cheese; blow up the fire.

Herc. Mortal, all hail! gods are we, three in number, that greet thee.

Pisth. I'm busy scraping nutmeg.

Herc. But what meat's this?

Pisth. These are some birds which I have apprehended on a charge of being revolutionists and discontented, and have therefore thought proper to execute them.

Herc. And must you needs season them before they will suit your palate?

Pisth. What? Hercules? So it is. How are you? what's your business?

Herc. We have been dispatched hither by the gods to sue for a cessation of hostilities,—

Servant of Pisth. There's no oil in the cruet.

Pisth. I can't help it: I must have them served up with plenty of gravy for all that.

Herc. For, on the whole, we are sufferers by the war. And as for you, if you will make peace with us, you shall have a plentiful supply of water in your ditches, and shall lead halcyon days in abundance. Here then we wait your pleasure, Jove's plenipotentiaries.

Pisth. Be it known, in the first place, that we were not the authors of this war: however, we'll enter upon a

treaty, provided you will do another thing, which we have a right to expect : and that other thing is this ; that Jove do give up his sceptre to us birds : on this condition, we are friends ; and if this shall seem satisfactory to you, you are welcome to eat dinner with me.

Herc. I've no objection at all ; my vote is perfectly at your service.

Nept. What's that you say ? why, surely, you wont consent to your father's being dethroned for the sake of a leg of wild fowl.

Pisth. How can that be ? wont the power of the gods be upon the increase rather than the decrease, if the birds shall lord it over the earth ? Men, at present, knowing that they have the clouds between them and you, avail themselves of the opportunity, and make light of your names every day ; but if you shall take the birds into partnership with you, if any one should swear by the crow and by Jupiter, conjointly, the crow will pass by slyly, and make them pay the forfeit of an eye, provided they dont abide by what they have sworn.

Nept. You are certainly very right.

Herc. So think I.

Pisth. And what do you say ?

Tribal. *Nabæsatreu.*¹

Pisth. Do you see ? he gives his consent too. Hear again another advantage which will accrue to you from this measure. If a man should promise a victim to any of the gods, and should afterwards fail to execute his promise, on the score that *the gods are patient and*

¹ The word is not meant to have meaning. Triballus is represented as a barbarian god.

long-suffering, and should so be mean enough to forget it, we'll manage this part of the concern.

Nept. Aye? how will you do that?

Pisth. When this man shall chance to be counting his money over, or shall be bathing, a hawk shall glide down gently upon him, and carry off to the god, to whom it is due, the value of two victims.

Herc. I again give it as my opinion that Jove ought immediately to put his sceptre into their hands.

Nept. Ask Triballus what he thinks.

Herc. Now dont you, Triballus, think that he ought—to be well trounced?

Tribal. *Saunaca bactaricrusa.*

Herc. He cordially assents to what we have been saying.

Nept. Whatever you think right, I think right too.

Herc. Resolved then, that thus much be done about the sceptre.

Pisth. But hark! another thought has just struck me. Jupiter may keep on Juno as his rib; but I must have the damsel Basilea to wife; this is a *sine quâ non*.

Nept. You dont take this proposal of our's in the right earnest, I perceive. If so, we had best be gone.

Pisth. Just as you like.—Hoa! cook, make the sauce good.

Herc. Heaven bless you, Neptune! would you have us quarrel about a woman?

Nept. What would you have me do?

Herc. Make peace and quietness, to be sure.

Nept. Foolish fellow! you little dream that they are cutting at the root of your interests all the while. You

are going counter to your own welfare: for if any thing should happen to Jupiter, in case he makes over his goods and chattels to these fellows, you'll be cut off with a shilling: and you know that, as long as matters continue as they are, Jupiter will leave you every farthing he has.

Pisth. Methinks this wont do though; (*to himself*) see, how he's humbugging you. Here, I'll let you into the secret. This good uncle of your's is cramming you to some purpose: by the law, you can't come in even for the clippings of your father's estate; you know you are a bastard, and not thorough-bred.

Herc. I a bastard? What do you say?

Pisth. A bastard, by all that's holy: your mother was not Jove's lawful wife. Besides, how could Minerva be his heiress, if any of his sons had been born in wedlock?

Herc. But what if I should come in for a share of his fortune, on the score of bare relationship?

Pisth. The law would not allow of it. This fellow Neptune, who is now spiriting you on to his own purposes, will lay claim to the whole estate, swearing that he is the heir-at-law. Hark! I'll repeat a passage from Solon on the subject; *Be it further enacted that a bastard have no claim or claims on an estate, if there are legitimate children in the case; if there is a failure of lawful issue, let the estate devolve to the next in kin.*

Herc. In that case I fear I shall come poorly off.

Pisth. You will sure enough. But were you ever regularly enrolled by your father?

¹ Petit. L. ii. tit. 4. § 8. [p. 222.] & Ignarr. de pluatriis Græcorum p. 48. ss. 51. & Pollux viii. 107,

Herc. Never ; and this has often surprised me.

Pisth. Why stare about thus idly, and look so savage ? If you'll be one of our party, I'll make a king of you, and feed you upon pigeon's milk.

Herc. Your right to the damsel is unquestionable ; I give her away to you.

Pisth. What say you ?

Nept. I give my vote decisively the other way.

Pisth. Now for Triballus's casting vote. What says your honor ?

Tribal. Thysse commelie damyselle, thysse mightie quean, I doe give to the byrde for to havve and to holde fromme thysse daye forward.

Herc. You give your consent then.

Nept. Not he, by Jove ; except to twitter like a swallow is to give consent.

Pisth. What ? does he say that the swallows are to have her ?

Nept. Do you two settle the dispute between yourselves, and I, if you have no objection, will be neutral.

Herc. I give my cordial assent to all you propose. But come, go with me to heaven, to take possession of Basilea and all her trinkets.

Pisth. These birds here, it seems, have been butchered in the very nick of time ; they'll cut a good figure at the marriage dinner.

Herc. I may as well then be roasting them in the interim, while you are gone.

Nept. You roast them ? you'd swallow them in a trice ; I know your stomach. Come along and keep us company.

Herc. Faith! I'd take good care of them.

Pisth. Hoa! some one bring me a wedding garment.

Chor. At Phauæ, near the fountain Clepsydra, is a crafty race of tongue-bellied men, who reap and sow, who gather in their grapes and figs,¹ with their tongues; Gorgiæ and Philippi by name, of barbarian pedigree. And it is from these tongue-bellied men that the custom which prevails throughout all Attica is derived, of cutting out the tongues² of the victims that are offered to the gods, and placing them apart by themselves.

MESSENGER, CHORUS, PISTHETÆRUS.

(*Pisthetærus returns with Basilea, &c.*)

Mess. Ye that have secured to yourselves perfect bliss, greater than words can express, O! happy race of birds; receive your sovereign within your favored walls. He approaches the golden palace, brighter to behold than a resplendent star: never did the far-darting beams of the sun shine so brilliantly. He comes attended by a damsel of inexpressible beauty, brandishing in his hand a thunderbolt, the winged shaft of Jove. And lo! a wonderful smell of incense spreads over the spacious void, the fumes

¹ Alluding to the word *συκοφαντεῖν*. See Pareus's Lexicon Plantinum in *sycophanta*.

² Wiland is of opinion that Aristophanes intimates by this that the sycophants ought to be punished by the loss of their tongues.

thereof affording a beautiful sight; while the perfumed breezes gently sweep through the volumes of curling smoke. Here he comes. Issue forth straightway the applauding strains of hallowed song.

Semi-Chor. Haste, onward, rush amain, and hover around the happy man under happy auspices; heavens! what beauty! what exquisite shape! O! happy man, that hast married so completely for the interest of this our city. Good luck have we, the race of birds, on account of this man. But haste, receive him with marriage songs, and with genial music, himself and his queen Basilea.

Semi-Chor. In this way was it that the fates conveyed Jove, great among the gods, emperor of Olympus, to Juno his consort. Hail, O! Hymen, Hymen! The immortal Cupid with golden wings held in his hand the well-directed reins, bride-god to Jove and the happy Juno. Hail, O! Hymen, Hymen!

Pisth. I admire your song, I admire your strains. The language pleases me. Now sing of the impetuous thunder of Jove, of his fiery lightning, and of his winged bolts.

Chor. O! thou golden light of the lightning, thou immortal fiery weapon of Jove, and ye impetuous, deep-sounding, cloud-compelling thunders, with which this man now shakes the earth, ruling through thee over the universe, and possessing as his consort Basilea, the daughter of Jove. Hail, O! Hymen, Hymen!

Pisth. Attend now on the marriage, ye various tribes of winged songsters; lie ye to the plain of Jove and to his marriage-bed. Stretch forth thy hand, O! happy dame; take hold of my wings and join with me in the dance: and I will whisk thee round in the air.

Chor. Huzza! Io! Pæon! Hurra! for the wedding!
Hail! thou that surpassest all the gods in greatness.

^a Τήνελλα was the shout of victory; it was the same with the cry of ἀλαλαί. “Ἀλαλαγμός· ἐπινίκιος ὕμνος, ἢ εὐφημος βοή. Tale quid erat etiam τήνελλα.” *Beck.* See *Lysistr.* 1293. *Acharn.* 1228. *Spanh.* on *Call. Apoll.* 25.

The End.

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